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Canadian families in Saudi face uncertain future

Photo: Courtesy Alison de Groot

Ron and Adele Service: separated by unexpected political tension.

Alison de Groot

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — As American troops settle into Saudi Arabia and tensions in the Middle East escalate, Canadian families working in Saudi are facing an uncertain future, and for some of them, indefinite separation.

On August 2, 1990, Iraq, led by President Saddam Hussein, invaded the tiny country of Kuwait which lies between Iraq's southeast and Saudi's northeast borders. This action brought a unanimous condemnation from the nations of the United Nations Security Council and a vote to impose an international trade and military blockade of Iraq.

Fearing an attempt by Hussein on Saudi, the world's largest producer of oil, U.S. President Bush announced last Wednesday his decision to send U.S. troops to aid the Saudi military in defending their border. The Canadian Embassy in Saudi is also reportedly preparing for the worst. Canadians working in Saudi have been advised that all non-essential personnel or families of Saudi-employed Canadians should leave the country as soon as possible. Those that remain are on alert and constantly in touch with the embassy.

Christianity forbidden

Ron Service of Millgrove, Ont., (near Hamilton) and his family have been living and working in Saudi for the last two years. Their home church is St. Cuthberts Presbyterian in Hamilton but they are currently associated with the underground Christian Church in Saudi where Christianity is forbidden. Service is a senior systems analyst for the Saudi Industrial Development Fund which is a national government bank.

Service, his wife Adele and their two children, Jessica and Aaron, were home in Canada for a summer vacation when the trouble in the Middle East began. Service has since returned to work in Saudi but Adele was not scheduled to return until August 17. Now she doesn't know when she will be able to rejoin her husband.

"We are all trying to remain calm," said Service from his housing compound in Riyadh in the central province. "It's quiet here but the east near AlJubail and the oil fields is apparently in more danger than we are."

Service says most of the families in his compound are already out of the country, as most were on vacation and simply did not return to Saudi. He says those that are still there are making plans to leave and seem to be having no difficulty.

Service says he and his 25 Western co-workers meet several times a day to listen to a BBC shortwave radio news broadcast which he describes as their "lifeline."

"A lot of what we hear is out of proportion. We hear a lot of rumours. Here it is very calm, very quiet in Riyadh. We have seen some U.S. planes flying in in the mornings," says Service describing the mood and action in Saudi.

Constant tension

Here in Canada, Adele Service is also trying to remain calm but says she is in a constant state of tension. She and the two children are staying at her parents' summer cottage near Peterborough, Ont. Together with her family, Adele watches the news constantly, hovering between "being horrified and a feeling that this whole thing will blow over and my life will be back to normal, I'll get on the plane on the 17th and be back with Ron in Saudi," she says.

"It's maybe too early to be afraid so I'm concerned, but if I let my mind wander, then there's fear," says Adele, whose re-entry visa expires Sept. 10.

Ron Service's goal is to serve out the remainder of his term in Saudi, which expires Oct. 1 this year, unless the situation there deteriorates. Adele hopes the situation stabilizes enough for her and their children to return for the remainder of her husband's term, but if it does not, she faces the very real possibility of being separated until October.

"Our faith in God, our trust that all is in his hands, and our prayers are getting us through this," says Adele. "That and my family here who are providing us with not only housing and transportation but love, prayers and support as well."

In his address to the nation last Wednesday, President Bush urged the churches of America to pray for the soldiers going to Saudi, but Ron and Adele Service are urging the churches here in Canada to pray for the families being separated and those who are still working in Saudi.

Thinkbit

"Make as much as you can; save as much as you can; give away as much as you can."

John Wesley

Polish citizens divided on proposed religious education in schools

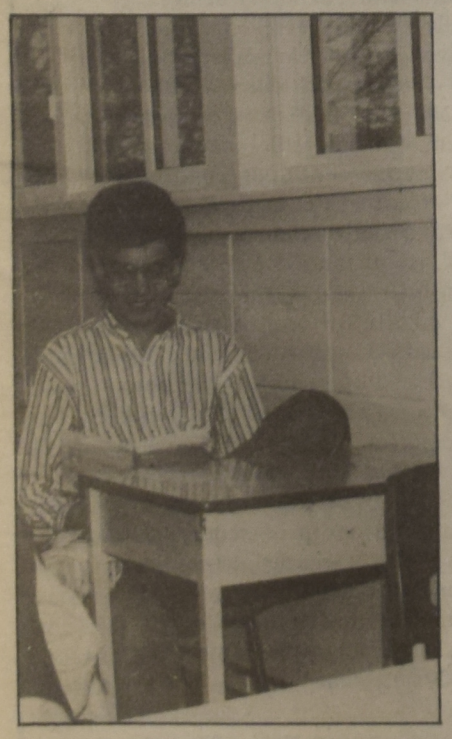

Photo: C.C. files

Polish public education: Should the church have a role?

Janice Broun

GALLOWAY, Scotland (NNI) — Widespread demand for the reintroduction of religious education in Poland's schools has generated heated debate within intellectual and religious circles, and divided Poles on the appropriateness of institutionalizing the church's role in the educational system.

During the Joint Government-Episcopate Commission's meeting earlier this year, Catholic bishops who support reintroducing religious education in the Polish school system stressed that since the church is participating in the reconstruction of the Polish state, it wished to play a part in the reform of national education.

Warsaw activist and Catholic layworker Halina Bortnowska, however, denounced the bishops' demands as "deplorable," emphasizing that "there is a real danger in making a sudden blanket decision."

"Very few people oppose religious education as a matter of principle," Bortnowska said in a telephone interview with NNI, "but I fear that it will be introduced without due preparation."

Like many other Catholic intellectuals associated with Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki's government, Bortnowska's reservations are linked to Mazowiecki's inaugural pledge to run a "non-ideological and non-denominational" government.

Government press spokesperson Malgorzata Niezabitowska said that although the government should help to ensure children receive religious instruction, "mandatory teaching would in all likelihood not be introduced."

Echoing the official government position, Deputy Minister of Education Anna Radziwill, also a Catholic, said introducing religious education into the schools could cause unnecessary tension and demean religion to merely another "school project." It would be dangerous, she said, to "incorporate teaching religion into a system based on hierarchical relations."

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Poland's schools

... continued from page 1.

The bishops point out, however, that canon law stresses both the rights and responsibilities of parents to ensure their children receive a proper religious and ethical education in schools, and emphasize that the educational system should reflect the Christian ethical values shared by most Poles. The bishops have made it clear that they are not aiming for exclusively Catholic teaching, and point to religious legislation of 1921 which states that all denominations should be guaranteed the same rights.

Member churches of the Polish Ecumenical Council, however, are skeptical about the desirability of institutionalized religious education and say they prefer restricting it to church premises. The Lutheran Church, for example, is already planning to open several private high schools.

While Protestant and Orthodox Christians fear the possibility of ostracizing non-Catholic children, should formal religious education be approved for the schools, they are not in a position to properly finance multi-denominational education, as is the Catholic Church.

Nevertheless, Catholic activist Bortnowksa affirms that non-Catholic denominations have not been as aggressive in disapproving the proposal as has been a small atheist minority, and that the problem is not so much between Protestants and Catholics, but between committed and nominal Catholics.

Ontario issues updated edition of provincial airports map

TORONTO — Ontario Minister of Transportation William Wrye issued an updated edition of the 'Ontario Airports' map on July 23.

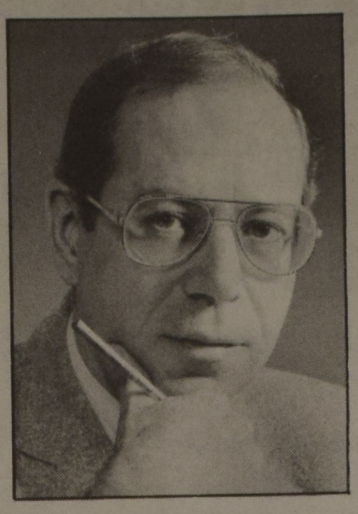
"This map is intended primarily for aviators, including private aircraft owners and operators," Wrye said. The map is produced to keep fliers informed of landing facilities across the province.

Designed and produced by the transportation ministry, the map identifies approximately 350 land aerodromes and 120 water aerodromes in Ontario.

Also included are airport co-ordinates, runway dimensions and types of surface, and the names and telephone numbers of airport operators. Colour-coded symbols are used for easy reference.

The map is available free from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation.

For copies contact the Map Office, Ministry of Transportation, East Building, 1201 Wilson Ave., Downsview, ON M3M 1J8; (416) 235-4339.



Jim Romahn

A flawed document

Vision 2000 has issued its policy statement on sustainable agriculture. It's a joint effort of the Catholic Rural Life Conference and the National Farmer's Union. And it emersed from a conference March 22 to 24 at Stratford. It is an interesting document. But it's badly flawed.

It says some things that are compelling, such as: "The primary role of a food system is to provide safe, nutritious food to the population." But it says some other things that will raise some people's hackles, such as: "The blueprint for society which we present cannot be achieved using the classic laissez-faire, free trade, competitive model. Canada, as a nation, has the sovereign right to order its economy in a way that will serve its people, not enslave them."

And it says some other things that seem sensible; but when they're examined more closely, they become questionable, such as: "Food security is vitally important to Canada as a nation. If Canadian food security is to be maintained, all sectors of the food system — from producer to consumer — must remain viable. Canada has the means, barring unforeseen disasters, to provide basic food self-reliance for Canadians."

That statement becomes questionable when Vision 2000 builds on it to say that farmers should have economic security, that "prices to producers (should be) based on full cost of production" and that supply management marketing boards should "become more prominent" in farming.

It also becomes questionable when Vision 2000 says: "Imports should only supplement food needs which cannot be met from domestic production," and when it says, "Marketing structures based only on competition should be replaced with models where family farm producers share existing marketings." It's their emphasis on share, without explanations about how that's to be done, other than pointing to marketing boards.

I said this document is flawed, so I better explain myself in a hurry. I'll start with some flaws in basic assumptions.

No master plan

The statement that the food system exists to provide a safe, nutritious food for the population makes the assumption that somebody can, or should, be in charge of a master plan for the nation. In fact there is no such master plan for the food industry, nor has there ever been one.

What we have is millions of individuals with a tremendous degree of freedom — and responsibility — to pursue private goals. Those private goals drive the system.

We do not, like the planned economies of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and China, have a master plan to provide the populace with safe nutrition. We produce food because people want it. And we have rules and regulations about safety and nutrition only to the extent that the people want those curbs placed on individual freedoms.

In our system, if people want their food to be risky and non-nutritious, it will be produced. In fact, to some extent it is. There are some other basic, and mistaken, assumptions. One is that "all Canadians share equally the right to food, which is as essential to life as air and water."

It may be a nice thought, but I don't know where that "right" exists. In fact, the whole idea of "rights" flies in the face of Christian doctrine, as Roman Catholic theologians should surely understand. Far from rights, we as Christians have only obligations — the obligations of obedience to God. The whole concept of "rights" sets individuals, or groups of people, on some pedestal of privilege. Nice though it sounds, consumers do not have a right to food. And nice though it may be, farmers do not have a right to their cost of production, plus a reasonable return.

On the other hand, we may wish to share a responsibility to provide everybody food, and to provide farmers a certain minimum return on investment and labour. And I'm disturbed by the Vision 2000 talk about "food security" as something that can and should be achieved by human effort. Once again, Christian doctrine holds that our only security rests in God. And Catholic theologians surely understand that position.

But understanding that position should also lead them to question the heat of passion the Vision 2000 puts into attacking our "classic laissez-faire, free trade, competitive model" and putting so much faith in the supply management alternative.

The truth is that both systems have flaws. And the flaws are rooted in the same problem — the sinful nature of human beings. Personally, I prefer the free enterprise alternative because it leaves a great deal of freedom — and responsibility — with individuals. That often seems to be a messy, inefficient, sometimes cruel and sometimes wasteful way of ordering our economy.

And it's true that great progress can be achieved by organizing and managing resources, as with farm co-operatives and marketing boards. But it's likewise true that those organized efforts can be headed down wrong directions and then, instead of benefits for the participants, there can be terrible consequences. There is no security in either economic system. In fact, there is no such thing as security in this world. Yet many people have been led astray, putting tremendous effort into earning money as a form of security, making friends as a form of security, developing prestige or gathering power or seeking to improve their health and fitness.

And so I am deeply disappointed in the Vision 2000 statement.

Jim Romahn is farm writer for the Kitchener-Waterloo Record *and lives in Kitchener, Ont.*

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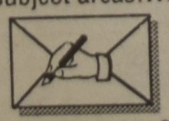

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Ontario funeral act toughened to protect consumers

Alison de Groot

TORONTO — The Ontario Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations recently announced tough new changes to the Funeral Directors and Establishments Act, known as Bill 30, to protect consumers and improve funeral services in the province.

"The new act and regulations were carefully developed to provide adequate protection for consumers," says Consumer and Commercial Relations Minister Gregory Sorbara.

Bill 30, due to take effect Oct. 1, is the ministry's response to consumer complaints of price-gouging and hard-sell tactics by Ontario's $350-million a year "bereavement care industry."

Included among the changes are a ban on telephone and door-to-door selling of funeral services or supplies, a requirement that a fully itemized price list of services and supplies be available and that a reasonable amount of information be provided over the phone upon request. This is to enable consumers to shop around without any pressure according to the ministry.

Other important provisions require that all funeral establishments offer a basic low-cost funeral and make provisions for non-traditional funerals, a written contract between the funeral home and the consumer and any money paid for pre-need contracts be held in a separate trust account. All pre-need contracts may be cancelled by the consumer at no charge within 30 days of signing as well.

Embalming not required

The new regulations extend licensing to those funeral directors who choose not to embalm. Embalming, which was not required under the old legislation (but all funeral directors had to be able to perform it), kept those persons who do not subscribe to it for cultural or religious reasons out of the industry. The ministry feels this provision better reflects the multicultural makeup of Ontario.

"The new act is in tune with the mosaic character of the province as it is today and it makes sure that the public is totally protected," says Jim Erb, a member of the Board of Funeral Services which enforces the act.

The board is promising to investigate any complaints of funeral homes who don't meet the new requirements and violators face penalties that range from a warning to severe fines and ultimately to de-licensing.

According to Alison Reynolds, registrar of the board, these changes in the act make Ontario the toughest regulated province.

"Members of the other provincial governments have been in contact with us and asked for copies (of the new regulations). Some of their regulations are currently under review and they want to take a look at ours."

"Our job now," says Jim Sargent another member of the board, "is to make sure that the consumers know what their new rights are. That's a priority on the board's agenda."

World Vision assists Romanian orphans

VANCOUVER (WVC) — World Vision, the international relief and development agency, has established a two-year $800,000 emergency assistance program to aid Romanian orphans. The Romanian Orphans Social Educational Support Project (ROSES) will assist thousands of institutionalized children. The program will focus on child development projects and training for institutional staff to enable these children to develop normally.

ROSES is expected to alleviate the conditions which resulted from one of the most heinous acts in history. Under the oppressive regime of Nicolae Ceausescu, an estimated 40,000 infants and children were placed in prison-like orphanages.

Most of these children are not orphans. They were abandoned by parents who could not afford to care for them due to their already large families. (In an attempt to boost the country's population, Ceausescu outlawed birth control except for women who already had four or five children.) Many of the children with physical handicaps and chronic medical or psychiatric problems were institutionalized because their parents could not meet their needs. In these archaic institutions, staff lacked basic disease prevention awareness and many children died from disease and neglect.

Beyond material needs

Post-revolution assistance, such as medicines, food and clothing, have poured into Romania but little has been done to address the needs of these orphans who need more than mere material improvements. The children risk severe psycho-motor retardation from lack of stimulation, emotional nurturing, play and early education.

"All of these children and babies have the capacity for improvement and the vast majority for complete reversal of the development failure," said J. Don Scott, president of World Vision Canada.

Dr. Barbara Bascom, a World Vision pediatrician with 20 years of experience in child development, will manage the ROSES program. She recently returned from a one-month tour of Romanian orphanages to assess clinical needs and develop a major assistance plan in conjunction with Romanian medical and humanitarian communities.

In addition to providing regular loving care for the children, the program will work with medical schools to train the orphanages professional staff in proper child and health care.

Bascom, who holds an MD from the University of Colorado School of Medicine, has done numerous studies and research on developmental disabilities. Along with her private practice in pediatrics, she served as the head of specialty clinics in neuropediatrics and developmental disabilities in Saudi Arabia.

World Vision has worked in Romania since 1977 when it provided emergency earthquake relief. Since then, World Vision has aided Romania through local, non-government project partners providing food and medical equipment. In February, World Vision sent $8.1-million of medical supplies and medical books to Romania in conjunction with two other aid agencies. Currently, an additional $6.2-million has been pledged for Romanian relief assistance in addition to the ROSES program.

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Editor (on sabbatical):
Bert Witvoet

General Manager:
Stan de Jong

Acting Editor:
Marian Van Til

Assistant Editor:
Robert Vander Vennen

Editorial Assistant:
Alison de Groot

Regular Contributors:
Paul DeGroot, Stan de Jong, Anne Hutten,
Reinder J. Klein, Angela Terpstra, Nandy Heule

Accounting:
Amy Van Dokkumburg

Advertising:
Suzanna Brasz

Circulation & Mailing:
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Layout & Design:
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Typesetting:
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Oka: armed insurrection

Ed Vanderkloet

One cannot possibly do justice to the complicated problem of aboriginal rights in a short editorial. Neither will we attempt to, except to say that the 400-year history of relations between whites and Natives in North America is marred by countless instances of betrayal by the whites.

At the heart of the violent dispute between the Mohawks and the police in Oka lies hopeless confusion about the nature of the state and what constitutes a nation. The Indians, or at least a vocal minority of them, insist that they form a separate, sovereign nation not bound by the laws of either Canada or Quebec. They claim control of the legal system, the ability to decide on such controversial practices as gambling, weapons ownership and hunting out of season, and the right to execute punishment in the traditional fashion.

They also want complete control over demography. Said Grand Chief Max Gros-Louis of the Huron-Wendat Indians, "Quebec will never be sovereign or independent unless it first recognizes the sovereignty and independence of the First Nations .... It's up to us to decide who is an Indian and who is not."

The Native assertions are powerfully backed up by the fact that in 1983 the former Quebec government of Rene Levesque formally recognized 10 tribes as "nations." The PQ made this move in an attempt to gain allies in its constitutional battles with Ottawa. But these allies are now posing a serious threat to the constitutional framework of the province.

Of course the problem is not confined to Quebec. Everywhere in Canada many Natives claim the right of self-government and, although they have not achieved such status, the reactions of the federal government and most provinces have been diffident at best. There is no clear consensus about what makes a state a state or what sets it apart from other structures in society. The resultant confusion is the main cause of governmental waffling in the Oka confrontation.

Native self-determination like apartheid

We should be clear in our mind that the Native idea of self-government based on race or tribe is an anomaly that clashes head on with the notion of the *Rechtsstaat*. A constitutional framework that guarantees freedom, justice and equality for all citizens undermines itself when it allows certain groups to favour or discriminate against others because of their race. Natives clamouring for aboriginal self-determination in effect advocate apartheid, i.e., separate homelands based on racial segregation.

But are Natives historically not entitled to reconstitute their own Huron, Ojibway, Iroquois, Cree, Micmac, Algonquin, Innuit, Dene, and dozens of other sovereign nations? We doubt it, if only because, no matter how much injustice has been done to the aboriginals, one cannot rewrite history. Must 25 million Canadians vacate the land because half a million Natives have historical, sometimes conflicting and often dubious claims to it? (We are not exaggerating for the sake of making a point; Quebec Indians claim 85 per cent of the province's landmass as theirs.)

Perhaps more importantly, do Natives *really* want to cling to their old, simple lifestyle? And if so (which we doubt), do they realize that this also means a repudiation of the modern economy (which pays each aboriginal $10,000 per year, most of which goes directly to the Natives and their own organizations) and a return to subsistence living conditions with the attendant occurrences of hunger, disease and early death? After all, one cannot simultaneously live in the Stone Age and in the 20th century. Surely, the influence of white society hasn't been all bad!

It is unquestionably true that the Natives are entitled to just and equal treatment, and that the more than 500 outstanding specific land claims must be settled in a spirit of co-operation and fairness. But it should also be recognized that the members of the militant warrior society, a group which is at the centre of violent disputes at Akwesasne, Kanesatake and Kahnawake, are (in the words of Iroquois journalist Jim Moses) "... opportunists latching onto political issues in order to expand power and ability to engage in broader criminal activities such as smuggling and trafficking by way of Indian independence in exploitation of valid Native concerns while hidden behind Native rights." *(St. Catharines Standard,* July 18, 1990.)

Mohawk warriors armed with AK-47 and M-16 assault rifles, clad in camouflage coveralls and balaklavas, and mounting barricades on public highways have no place in a civilized society. We simply cannot tolerate a state within a sate. Their actions should be called what they are: armed insurrection. And, again in the words of Jim Moses, "Neither Indian nor non-Indian can allow this to happen because the resulting spread of conflagration will touch every Canadian and alter this country for the worst forever."

Ed Vanderkloet does research for the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

ROOFTOP MUSINGS/ALYCE OOSTERHUIS

Marketing Christianity

A few weeks ago we spent three days listening to Disney World marketeers as they espoused the doctrines of quality family entertainment according to the word of Walt Disney. What was most striking about the presentations was the conviction, the dedication and the freedom with which Steve, Terry, Lynn et al., used the phrase "as Walt used to say ...." They spoke with a reverent familiarity that put those of us with a non-Disney World framework for doctrine to shame. How many of us would and do unashamedly refer to "ask Christ stated ..." in a setting with non-Christians?

Why were we there? We had come to learn from the marketing experts how we could effectively capture the communities' interest, commitment and dedication to Christian education. And the lesson which we learned is the lesson that we have essentially known throughout the eras of Christendom. Faith is not that to which we give lip-service. Faith is that which inspires the heart, inflames the senses and propels into action our very being. Faith demands that we give of ourselves tirelessly, obediently, constantly, as one dedicated community.

Committed to an ideal

For Disney World employees the acronym PATA encapsulates their relationship with their employers: P = pay (a just wage); A = availability (when called upon); T = transportation (supply your own); A = appearance (a distinctively clean-cut Disney World demand). From the moment that they begin their employment, the new-hires are made aware of these demands and are imbued with the truths of this relationship. Consequently, it is by their obedience, appearance, selfless devotion to cleanliness and lack of clutter that one can recognize the Disney World employee. And the longer the person stays in the world of Walt Disney, the more readily identifiable the Disney marks.

Disney World essentially presented us with a challenge; the challenge to go out and do likewise. If our hearts and minds are truly committed and inflamed with the passion for Christ, then go out and show it to the world in which you live and work. If we are convinced of the truth of excellence in our Christian schools, then we should live out of that truth in the work that we do, even if it means that we have to change our hairstyles. One cannot market (i.e., sell) that which has not changed the marketeer.

Mouse ears or crown of thorns?

The seminars were concluded with a communal pledge to go forth and market effectively our faith in Christian education. In keeping with the Disney dictum that we should take our jobs but not ourselves too seriously, we wore Mickey Mouse ears during the pledge. It was a last light-hearted attempt to have us be enamoured of the fun that work can and should be. But for those of us who live in a world in which one cannot drop in or out of as new- or ex-hires, it may have bordered on sacrilege. Faith, commitment, the marketing of Christian education, does not enable us to dichotomize our lives into work and self. As the song states: "They will know we are Christians by our love ...." For the Christian educators present, it would have been more appropriate to close the sessions with a pledge to go forth and do likewise while wearing the crown of thorns which was Christ's reward for marketing his love and commitment so effectively.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of educational psychology at The King's College in Edmonton.

Longer letter

Faber and Valk closer than they think

I was sorry to see the review by John Valk of *Essays in Reformed Doctrine* by Professor Jelle Faber in C.C. of July 27, 1990, since both John and Jelle are friends of mine, and the review gave a rather negative impression of both of them.

Jelle, it seems, is an out-of-date polemicist who invites adjectives like "arrogant" and "vitriolic" and whose theological essays are mainly of interest as an indication of where the Canadian Reformed Church is at. John, on the other hand, comes across as someone who considers himself above actually dealing with the theological content of Faber's essays, and seems to have little interest in promoting ecumenical dialogue, at least not among the heirs of Dutch Calvinism.

I know for a fact that both of these impressions are seriously misleading, and I would like to take this opportunity of setting the record straight.

As I know Professor Faber, he is a Reformed systematic theologican of the old school, that is, he is a first-rate scholar with impeccable academic credentials who has a solid grasp of the history of doctrine, especially in the Reformed tradition, and a great sense of the priority of scripture over theology (I have repeatedly been impressed with the wealth of exegetical insight that he has at his fingertips).

It is no accident that he was invited to be visiting professor at Westminster Theological Seminary some years ago. Professor Faber also has a keen sense of the antithesis in theology and this no doubt accounts for the polemical tone of some of his writings, but he also has some very worthwhile things to say about the catholicity of the church, which I think provide an excellent point of contact for constructive theological dialogue with non-Canadian Reformed theologians who also seek to stand in the Calvinist tradition.

I certainly do not agree with Professor Faber on every point in theology (I daresay our view of the institutional church is quite significantly different), and I don't like to see my own denomination taken so relentlessly to task either, but I honour him as a Reformed theologian of considerable stature; and I do not rule out the possibility that his criticisms of the Christian Reformed Church may actually be right on occasion.

'Religious studies' is not 'theology'

It behooves me to be diffident in taking theological issue with the likes of Professor Faber: he has a classical European training in theology and I have no degree in theology at all. I wish Dr. Valk had been a bit more diffident too, since he doesn't have one either ("theology" and "religious studies" aren't the same thing at all in today's academic world), and I'm sure that he doesn't pretend to be a systematic theologian.

Nor is John as uninterested in ecumenical dialogue or the history of Dutch Calvinism as his review would lead us to believe (in fact he's something of an expert on the latter). And I wouldn't be surprised to find that his fellow chaplains at the University of New Brunswick thought that he has a pretty keen sense of the antithesis as well, and is prepared to take a stand on fundamental doctrines of historic Christianity, even specifically Reformed ones.

In other words, Valk and Faber may have more in common than this unfortunate review suggests. They represent two wings of the Reformed world that have to learn to talk together — civilly.

Al Wolters
Professor of Religion and Theology (sic)
Redeemer College
Ancaster, Ont.

BEYOND BELIEF

AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED IN EASTERN EUROPE, IT'S EASY TO BELIEVE THERE WILL BE A SINGLE WORLD GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE SECOND COMING.
THAT AND A WORLD CHURCH
JUST ONE CHURCH WITH EVERYONE IN AGREEMENT?
YEP.

'Gimme a break'

I read Robert VanderVennen's article regarding the plight of real estate salespersons and agencies (C.C., July 27) with growing amazement. Had the article championed the needs of the homeless, or even of the first-time homebuyer, I would have understood its presence as lead article in C.C. But to buy into the dirge of woe of failed real estate agents shows considerable lack of perspective. Nor is their plight due solely, or even chiefly, to the economic policies of Marshall Crowe and Michael Wilson.

It is not my intention to cast aspersions on the character of either Mr. Schuringa or Mr. Baarda, since I know neither of them. However, the financial hole some real estate professionals find themselves in is almost undoubtedly due to their own unbridled greed. Prudent business people, in whatever field, plan ahead for leaner times (cf. Genesis 41:25-36). Many real estate people in the greedy '80s, however, overextended themselves by speculative investing. And now that chicken has come home to roost. Making money in your sleep is no longer "on."

I am convinced that some in the real estate profession are at least as culpable for rising housing costs as are our political masters. And just because 80 per cent of their costs are in wages doesn't mean that their failure can be attributed to the new employer contributed health plan fees. After all, real estate people have little overhead. With recyclable signs all they need to operate is a phone booth, a pen and a pad of paper.

What's next for C.C.? An in-depth look at the reduced expectations of insider-trades on the stock exchange? Or the scandalous costs for the upkeep of BMW's and Porsche's? Gimme a break, please.

Willem Hart
Toronto, Ont.

More letters on page 6.

Letters/Events

Objects to poem

It says in *Calvinist Contact* that "*Calvinist Contact* is an independent Christian weekly that seeks to proclaim the truth, care and rule of Jesus Christ."

If that is true, then I can't understand that you give a place to the poem "On being called" (June 8, 1990).

Where does it say or even give the slightest idea that Eli groaned and turned away when Samuel came to him? Where does it say that his breath smelled bad?

And in verse 3 of the poem the old man was annoyed because he was awakened twice from his "dreamless alcoholic sleep."

It makes me very sad that you put such poems in the paper.

Why do you do it? Don't you want to say no to a contribution even if it is against the truth of the scriptures?

Eli sinned because he was not strong enough in regards to the sins of his sons, but you never get the idea from scripture that he did not love and fear the Lord.

He was too weak as a father and high priest and that brought punishment upon him and his sons.

Mrs. J. Overduin
London, Ont.

Calendar of Events

Aug. 20-24	"Teaching the Holocaust in the Canadian Context: Engaging the Heart and Mind," a conference for educators at the U. of T., **Toronto,** Ont. For info. call Pnina Spetgang, (416) 635-2883, Ext. 144.
Sept. 9	Dutch service with Rev. R. Koops, at 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster,** Ont.
Sept. 13	CFFO Prov. Board meets from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., CRC, **Georgetown,** Ont. For info. call (519) 837-1620 (a.m.) or 338-3214 (p.m.).
Sept. 15	Second National Capital Region Holy Spirit Conference, The Life Centre, **Ottawa,** Ont. For info. call (416) 890-3222.
Sept. 15	Annual Ontario CRC School Convention, from 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the CRC, **Willowdale,** Ont. For info. call (519) 884-6044.
Sept. 18-22	Visit the food booth of Woodland Chr. High School (Cambridge chapter) at this year's plowing match near **Paris,** Ont.
Sept. 21-22	"Sola Scriptura," First Annual Toronto Conference on Reformed Theology, at the Airport Skyline Hotel, **Toronto,** Ont. Speakers: James I. Packer, Roger R. Nicole and Ronald M. Gleason. For info. call Richard Van Seters at (416) 477-2266 or Fax (416) 477-2268.
Sept. 21-22	All-Ontario Conference of Committee of Concerned Members of the CRC. At Maranatha CRC, **Woodstock,** Ont. Theme: "God's Word in a changing world." For info. call (416) 562-5196.
Sept. 26-29	"Suffering and Survival — The Netherlands 1940-'45," a commemoration at Dordt College, **Sioux Center,** Iowa, of the Nazi occupation and liberation. Highlight: Anne Frank Exhibit and much more. For info. call Dr. James C. Schaap at (712) 722-6250.
Sept. 30	Amsterdam's "Concertgebouw" conducted by Riccardo Chailly in concert, 3 p.m., DeVos Hall, **Grand Rapids,** Mich. For info. call (616) 456-3333.

Objects to those who objected to poem

What is it about some of C.C.'s readers that they collapse in shock whenever they read poetry (or cartoons, or articles, or opinions) which doesn't quite fit in with their thinking? Melody Takken-Meeter's poem about the call to Samuel was her strongest on that page, yet a reader immediately finds it unacceptable, distasteful and an offense to the Christian faith.

Come on, people; we are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb! Doesn't that mean anything in terms of our own freedom, and in terms of allowing a poet to express her vision? In this case, the poet used her imagination to think how it might have been for Samuel, a mere child confronted with grossly sinful adults as well as with the powerful call from God. She captured the loneliness of that child and did so in contemporary language.

Certain readers seem to find poetry acceptable only if it rhymes neatly and uses archaic language, and says lots of nice things about loving God and being a good person and doing things for your fellow human beings. That's not poetry; that's versification (and sometimes an abomination, in its lack of either beauty or prophetic vision).

The criticism leveled at this poem comes from the same attitude which wants neat little rules for every aspect of daily life, which sees everything in black-and-white with no grey variables, which considers all change to be a manifestation of moral and religious decay. This is not a Christian attitude, but legalism comparable to the whitewashed sepulchres of Jesus' day.

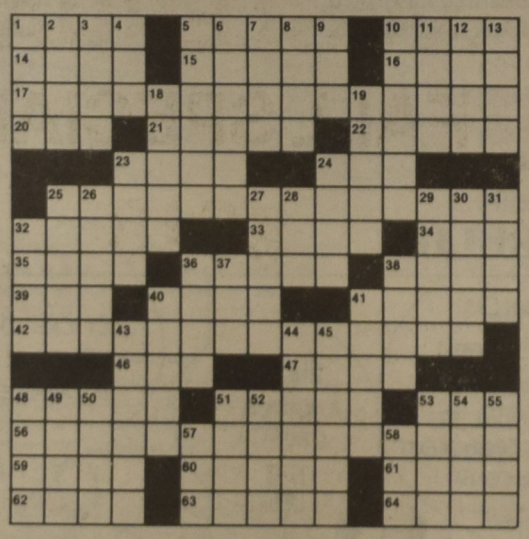
I'd like to ask the critic (and those who share his opinion): Of what are you afraid? What are you concerned about? Are you sure that the best way to glorify our Lord is to define within very narrow boundaries the Christian way of life? Could it not be a generous, loving commitment to honour those among us who have the courage to speak out in poetry, literature and art? If you are not a poet, does that mean you can set the rules for poets? If you are a bookkeeper, would you welcome a poet who told you how to do double entries?

Please, let's open our hearts and minds to the great diversity of gifts seen in fellow believers, even when we don't understand what they are saying. To label the poetry of Melody Takken-Meeter "an offense to the Christian faith" is an offense to the Christian faith, because our faith is so much richer and wider and deeper than the near-sighted vision in which such criticism is rooted.

Anne Hutten
Kentville, N.S.

Weekly Crossword

by Avery P. Bromfield



ACROSS
1 Space gp.
5 Wine source
10 Till contents
14 Molding
15 Android
16 Words of understanding
17 — "Discovery" (vehicle for 25A)
20 Attention
21 Leg joint
22 Whale food
23 Monthly payment: abbr.
24 — alai
25 The Hubble — (eye in the sky)
32 Planet
33 Long river
34 Inlet
35 Courage
36 Paragon
38 Poems
39 Old govt. gp.
40 Poi source
41 Watchful
42 Objects of study by 25A
46 "Norma —"
47 Ugh's kin
48 Helmet part
51 Doctrine
53 X
56 Problem for 25A
59 Rocky ridge
60 Defense part
61 Nimbus
62 Swerves
63 Jagged
64 Luminary

DOWN
1 Observe
2 Turk. title
3 Crystal gazer
4 Roman bronze
5 Farmer's org.
6 Launch need
7 Eve's son
8 Sit
9 Ordinal suffix
10 Like lemons
11 It. wine city
12 Vend
13 Achilles' vulnerable point
18 Mend
19 Decree
23 — Dillon
24 Congeal
25 Ranee wear
26 "The — Is Right"
27 Give funds to
28 Golf problem
29 Command
30 Jetties
31 Bridge seat
32 Zounds!
36 Construct
37 Place suffix
38 Cheers
40 Autocrats
41 Kind of committee
43 Photo prints
44 "Aida" and "Carmen"
45 Basinger film
48 Diversify
49 Willow genus
50 Diving duck
51 One-name actress
52 Change the style of
53 Tense
54 Poet Pound
55 At hand
57 Before: pref.
58 Owns

Last Week's Puzzle

C	A	F	E		A	B	O	D	E		A	S	T	A
O	L	E	A		C	U	R	I	A		S	H	I	N
R	E	S	T	A	U	R	A	N	T		S	O	R	T
M	E	S	S	H	A	L	L		E	N	T	R	E	E
				O	T	S		A	R	I	S	E		
M	E	D	D	L	E		B	L	I	P		D	A	R
A	B	I	R	D		S	L	O	E		M	I	M	I
L	E	N	A		S	P	A	N	S		A	N	O	N
T	R	I	G		N	O	S	E		D	U	E	L	S
S	T	N		C	A	K	E		S	O	I	R	E	E
		G	R	A	C	E		M	E	N				
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H	O	O	F		B	R	A	S	S	E	R	I	E	S
O	B	O	L		A	I	M	E	E		O	N	O	R
P	O	M	E		R	O	A	R	S		D	S	C	S

Mid-America Reformed Seminary

invites you to their annual

Seminary Festival

activities on **Thursday, August 30, 1990.**

At 2:00 p.m. Rev. Nelson D. Kloosterman will deliver the Convocation address. An Association Meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. The evening meal will be served from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. The Rev. John H. Piersma of Lansing, Ill., will give the Festival address at 7:30 p.m. All the activities will be held at the Calvary Christian Reformed Church of Orange City, IA.

Second Annual

Worship and "Cell"-ebration Conference

to give assistance in worship and cell group leadership.

Friday, Sept. 21, 1990, 7:00 p.m.
to Saturday, Sept. 22, 1990, 4:30 p.m.

WHAT? Worship, praise, teaching, workshops on worship and cell groups.

PARTICIPANTS? Pastors Al VandeGriend, Henry Lunshof, Henry Wildeboer, Karl House, Mike Abma, Ron Fisher plus worship leaders, musicians, etc.

FOR? pastors, elders, worship committee members, cell group leaders and organizers.

COST? $35 per person (only $30 if registered by Sept. 1). Enrolment is limited.

INFORMATION? A letter and brochures were sent to each CRC Council in Ontario. Ask your pastor or clerk **OR** write or call the sponsoring church,

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Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Calls accepted

— to First, Abbotsford, B.C., Rev. Bert Slofstra of Georgetown, Ont.

— to Newmarket, Ont., Rev. William Dykstra of First, Chatham, Ont.

Address changes

Rev. Richard Stienstra, 108 Broad St. W., Dunnville, ON N1A 1E1; (416) 774-1130; effective immediately.

Rev. Bert Slofstra, 33532 Holland Ave., Abbotsford, BC V2S 1G3; effective Sept. 10, 1990.

Dr. Sidney Greidanus, 2230 Woodlawn SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506; effective Sept. 7, 1990.

Stated clerk of Classis Huron: Rev. Dirk Miedema, 123 Raglan St., Clinton, ON N0M 1L0; effective immediately.

New clerk

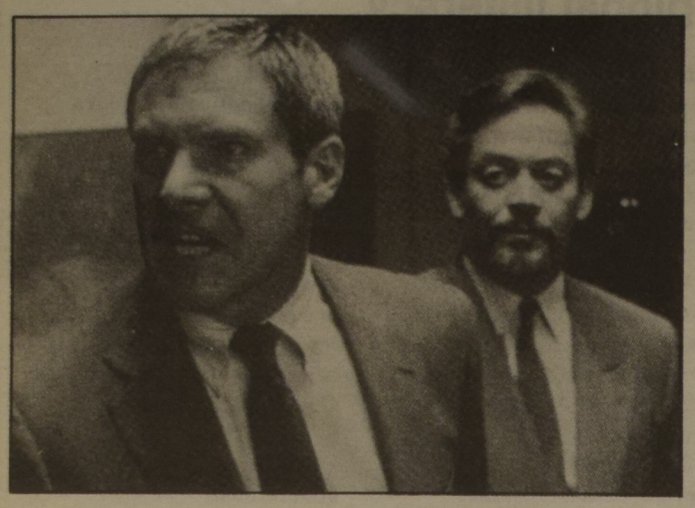
Jubilee Fellowship, St. Catharines, Ont.: Stan de Jong, Jubilee Fellowship CRC, P.O. Box 2241, Station B, St. Catharines, ON L2M 6P6; (416) 934-5358.

New position filled

Dr. Melvin J. Flikkema, assistant executive director of the Chaplain Committee of the Christian Reformed Church has announced that **Rev. Carl Tuyl,** upon his retirement Sept. 1, 1990, will join the committee as part-time Canadian consultant for chaplaincy.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til



Presumed Innocent

Rated R
Stars Harrison Ford, Brian Dennehy, Bonnie Bedelia, Greta Scacchi, Raul Julia
Directed by Alan J. Pakula, based on the novel by Scott Turow

Presumed Innocent is a murder mystery and courtroom drama. It's also a cautionary tale about the wages of sin, private and public: adultery on the one hand, and the perverting of the justice system on the other.

Rusty Sabich (Harrison Ford) is a Midwestern, middle-aged attorney who prosecutes criminals. He's known as a pretty straight arrow: he's remarkably idealistic; he respects the judicial system despite his knowledge of how those pledged to uphold the law often corrupt it; he's dependable; he's not controlled by a desire for career advancement; and he's a "family man" who doesn't fool around with other women.

His noble motives notwithstanding, Sabich works too long and too hard, neglecting his young son and mathematician wife. He loses his balance between career and family.

So it's not a total surprise that when the ambitious and icily beautiful Carolyn Polhemus (Greta Scacchi) joins the city's staff of prosecuting attorneys and tries to seduce Rusty (she thinks he has the power to get her to the top), he eventually succumbs.

A man like Sabich doesn't do things half-way: he becomes obsessed with Polhemus, unaware that he and several of his other colleagues are being used by her. His obsession wreaks havoc in his marriage.

Then one morning Sabich comes to the office and hears the awful news: Carolyn is dead — bizarrely tied, strangled and seemingly raped. Not knowing of Sabich's past affair with Polhemus, his boss, Raymond Horgan (Brian Dennehy), puts him on the case. Horgan is in the midst of a messy campaign for re-election as district attorney so he needs and trusts Sabich to "find him a killer" quick.

But Sabich's investigation begins to lead to himself; he is pulled from the case. Horgan's newly-elected rival charges Sabich with the murder.

Over the edge?

Can we presume he's innocent? Could someone like Rusty brutalize and murder a woman? He was, after all, spurned by her as soon as she realized he wouldn't play her manipulation game.

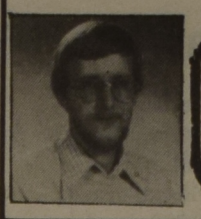
Presumed Innocent guides us slowly through a labyrinth of municipal corruption on the way to Sabich's grand jury trial. We find out Rusty's true role in the killing in the last 15 minutes of the movie in a very odd twist.

While theoretically the surprise ending should work, its rationale is not airtight. When one looks back there's not quiet enough evidence to warrant it, though when the surprise is sprung its dramatic effect is undeniable.

Director Alan J. Pakula has chosen to follow Turow's novel very carefully, a good decision. Turow is a lawyer himself and his insider's knowledge gives his tale a firm and gritty grip on reality. (The vulgarity and occasional profanity of some of the story's morally elastic characters is, as one might expect, not inoffensive.)

Of course, film as a medium can't get into the minds of its characters like a good book can. That's especially a drawback in a story where motivations, yearnings, moral failures and the intricacies of human relationships are carefully woven into the "action." Still, of the current crop of summer movies, this is one of only a couple worth seeing. Despite its grit it has a conscience, it provides something to think about, and it's full of fine performances.

Amusing ourselves to death



MEDIA SCAN

Henry Knoop

The title of this column comes from a book by Neil Postman, a writer well known to many educators for his lucid comments on education and North American culture. In his book, Postman takes a critical look at how television has influenced and shaped our modern culture.

He makes many excellent points. The change from focusing on the written word to focusing on television, he says, has "dramatically and irreversibly shifted the content and meaning of public discourse, since two media so vastly different cannot accommodate the same ideas. As the influence of print wanes, the content of politics, religion, education, and anything else that comprises business must change and be recast in terms that are more suitable to television."

As a result, according to Postman, North Americans no longer talk to each other; they entertain one another. They do not exchange ideas; they exchange images. They do not argue with propositions; they argue with good looks, celebrities and commercials.

In addition, we have developed a "now ... this" worldview, for on television nearly every half hour is a discrete event, separated in content, context and emotional texture from what precedes and follows it.

Don't look for truth

Postman is not against television, however. "TV junk for junk's sake is television at its best." Viewers should come to television knowing that what they are watching is "junk," trivial entertainment. They should not come to television expecting to find "truths." For at its worst, television contorts politics, religion and other areas of cultural significance, claiming to present truths while actually the medium is more concerned with providing entertainment that will boost ratings."

I came across Postman's book this summer while I was taking an education course. On one of my morning drives to the university I overheard a radio guest on CBC discussing the latest research on television's effects on children. Her solution? Restrict television viewing to three hours a day.

Three hours! That's not much of a solution to me. Especially when, as an educator, I am confronted with the effects of television viewing on my students every year again. Students, by and large, have become passive learners due to sitting for hours in front of the television with no interaction and no active grappling with information. I would think an hour to an hour-and-a-half of "junk" television would be a much better guide for all school age children.

Aldous Huxley, in *Brave New World,* warns that our society is becoming trivial because our quest for entertainment dominates all other aspirations. Indeed, television appears to have become the "soma" pill of our culture. It's time to start cutting back.

Henry Knoop teaches English at Ajax High School. He lives in Bowmanville, Ont.

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Linguistics institute intensifies 55-year battle against global illiteracy

CALGARY (WBT) — The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), already on the front line in the battle against world illiteracy, expects to play an increasing role, with strong Canadian participation, it has announced.

SIL, a sister organization or Wycliffe Bible Translators, is being approached for more help as international concern grows over worldwide illiteracy, says Steve Walter, international literacy co-ordinator. Governments, churches, universities and local agencies are requesting technical assistance.

Walter says such areas as sub-Saharan Africa, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and south Asia are giving more attention to problems related to illiteracy.

"In addition, a number of countries are taking a new look at vernacular education as they seek a better educational strategy for minority populations," says Walter.

An example is PNG, where the government has embarked upon a national literacy program to reduce the 80-per-cent illiteracy rate among the country's four million people. The literacy program will be in as many of PNG's 850 languages as are considered viable.

International Literacy Year

The government, in recognition of SIL's expertise in literacy work, has asked for literacy consultants to help start the program. SIL's PNG branch has been working in the country for three decades.

The United Nations, which estimates 900 million people around the world can't read, has designated 1990 as International Literacy Year. However, SIL has been involved in international literacy projects, as well as linguistics and Bible translation, for more than a half century.

SIL's fight against illiteracy began in Mexico in 1935. Its goal was to put unwritten languages in writing, produce basic primers, translate the Bible, and teach the people to read and write in their own language.

Responding to the global problem of illiteracy is important because the inability to read and write binds people to poverty and unemployment. Illiteracy prevents men, women and children from achieving their potential.

However, SIL adds a vital and unique dimension by translating the Bible into the language of the people. As a result, the goal of SIL is to make the Bible available in every language, and to make biblical literacy a reality.

Since 1935, SIL has conducted literacy work in 750 languages, representing more than 70 million people, says Walter. It is estimated that 1.5 million people have become literate as a direct result of this effort and many more indirectly.

These efforts are recognized internationally, as United Nations General Secretary Javier Perez de Cuellar did in a letter to an international SIL conference.

"Your mission as ambassadors of literacy deserves high praise," he wrote. "By transcribing into writing mother tongues that were previously unwritten, especially among tribespeople distant from urban centres, you are facilitating the preservation of ethnic cultures and building bridges for those cultures to the rest of humanity."

SIL's goal has not changed, only enlarged. There are more than 6,000 spoken languages in the world. Over half still don't have even a written alphabet.

Hundreds of literacy workers are needed by the organization, generally wherever linguistics and translation work is being done. SIL's most urgent needs are for 200 literacy specialists in Africa and 50 in Papua, New Guinea, 15 in each of the Philippines and Latin America, 10 in southeast Asia and 10 in other parts of the world.

Canadian recruits needed

Canadian involvement in future literacy work is hoped to be significant as SIL intensifies its recruitment of literacy workers. Currently, more than 400 of SIL's 5,900 career and short-term members are Canadians.

Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada, Inc., based in Calgary, Alta., has played an increasing funding role in many of SIL's large-scale literacy projects.

Through its International Development Assistance (IDA), department, Wycliffe Canada has helped initiate and fund literacy programs in Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Cameroon, Kenya, Peru, Colombia, the Philippines, India, PNG, Congo and Guatemala.

IDA is distributing more than $500,000 annually in matching grants from the federal government's Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and several provincial governments. These are used for community development programs, usually literacy projects.

One of IDA's grants is supplementing the PNG national literacy effort. Matching grants of $108,100 from CIDA and $9,500 from Alberta's Agency for International Development are designated for the introduction of a preschool literacy program for indigenous languages. It is being administered by Canadians Steve and Vicky Simpson, in co-operation with PNG's East Britain provincial government.

For more information, contact Wycliffe Bible Translators of Canada. Inc., Box 3068, Station B, Calgary, AB T2M 4L6.

Catholic synod to confront 'formation of priests,' other topics

OTTAWA (CCCB) — The Canadian delegates to the 1990 International Synod of Bishops are asking Canadian Catholics to help them as they prepare to participate in the October synod meetings dealing with the formation of priests. Brief questionnaires have been sent to each diocese to help focus the discussion of the topic by groups of both laity and clergy.

The Synod Preparatory Committee (made up of four elected delegates) has asked for study papers on a variety of topics such as the influence of secularism on the formation of present and future priests; long term, ongoing formation programs for priests; co-responsibility in the church; the relationship between ordained and non-ordained ministries; the role of the church community in the formation of priests; and the reduced number of vocations.

Another Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) ad hoc committee is studying guidelines to assist dioceses when dealing with cases of sexual abuse involving clergy. It has asked the synod committee to include this topic in its presentations to the synod.

At the 1990 CCCB plenary assembly meetings in Ottawa this month, the synod committee will report on the themes it would like to bring to Rome. The bishops from across Canada attending the assembly will discuss these themes and their recommendations will guide the delegates in the preparation of interventions to be made at the synod meetings in Rome in October in the name of the Canadian bishops.

How synod machinery gets in gear

The synod will open in Rome on October 1, 1990, and will be attended by over 200 bishops from around the world. During the first days of the synod, national or regional delegations will present oral and written interventions based on the working paper for the synod. This working paper, prepared by the synod committee of the Vatican, is based upon the responses it received to the earlier outline paper or "lineamenta" that had been studied by all the episcopal conferences.

Once these initial interventions are completed, the synod bishops will break into smaller language groups for fuller discussion of the working paper. The reports of these small groups and all the interventions will then be pulled together in a synthesis to be presented in draft form to the synod bishops for amending and voting. At this point, they also vote on whether they wish to publish the synthesis and whether they will make a short pastoral statement on the synod topic.

The synod is an advisory body to the Pope. All the synod discussion notes, interventions and reports are forwarded to the Pope (who, most probably, attended all the sessions in person), and he issues a longer, more fully developed pastoral statement on the topic of the synod. This latter is usually issued within a year.

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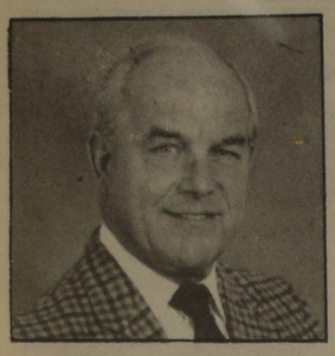

Canadian Church Scene

Jacob Kuntz

Of politics, evangelizing and the simple life

After Meech Lake

The spectacle of Meech Lake has baffled many people. The following sombre lines were written (even before the collapse of Meech Lake) by Peter Trueman in *The Catholic Register* of June 16 in which he bares his soul as he ponders what is happening in Canada today compared with what goes on in other parts of the world.

We live in exciting times. Night after night, we read about the leaders of the Soviet Union and other Eastern European nations freeing their intellects, giving tongue to ideas that would have deemed seditious a year ago, and discovering in themselves a new generosity of spirit.

We continue to be moved by Mikhail Gorbachev, a man who remains larger than life, despite those who feel obliged to belittle his accomplishments and second-guess him, in Moskow and elsewhere.

He may be walking a high wire at home, but he has been the key to incredible changes in Eastern Europe which will not easily be undone.

We watch what is happening in South Africa, where the courage of President F.W. de Klerk and the wisdom and patience of Nelson Mandela will overcome in the end, despite lingering hatred on the left and right.

The two leaders do not see eye to eye on everything, but thanks to their vision, the spirit of equality is taking root in the warm, rich soil.

And then, with a jolt, and a sinking feeling, our attention comes home, where leaders without vision continue to exhaust their own cramped store of ideas, and at the same time our goodwill and patience.

Canada is in trouble because French and English Canadian politicians have been dishonest with each other and with us for as long as I can remember, aided and abetted by their respective media, and because both French and English Canadians are now feeling betrayed.

We have finally realized that despite that noble vision of a bilingual society, and the millions that have been spent on translating one official language into another, we have no idea what the other is talking about. We have come to understand that our idea about the purpose and the function of Confederation are so far apart, that in effect, we have been living in two different places.

Incredibly, we have reached a point where the Americans and the Soviets, whose fear and loathing of each other held the world hostage for 35 years, are beginning to understand each other better, and are beginning to talk to each other more frankly and easily than our two founding cultures are able to here in the privacy of our own living rooms.

We may even have reached a stage in which the Afrikaners and the black tribes of Southern Africa stand a better chance of living together under one roof in reasonable harmony than do we in Canada, where French and English have co-existed without actual blood-letting for more than two centuries.

But it seems to me that we have now slipped into the grip of the same kind of hopeless self-perpetuating prejudice that characterizes a Northern Ireland or a Lebanon, and it will take much more than ritual incantations to dispel it.

Christian festival III

This month the third Canadian Christian Festival will be held in Halifax. Not only the mainline churches, but also evangelical denominations (Pentecostal, Mennonite, Salvation Army, Christian Reformed) will participate in this festival. We quote the following items from *Anglican Journal* of June 1990:

Thousands of people from all over Canada are expected to converge on the Halifax-Dartmouth area August 16-19 for the Canadian Christian Festival III, described by organizers as largest interchurch gathering of Christians ever held in Atlantic Canada.

One of the highlights of the festival will be an address by Anglican Bishop Desmond Tutu of Cape Town, South Africa, winner of the 1984 Nobel Peace Prize.

Other principal speakers will include Emilio Castro of Uruguay, general secretary of the World Council of Churches; U.S. sociologist and author Anthony Campolo; and author John Powell, a U.S. Jesuit priest whose books have sold more than 12 million copies.

The theme of the festival is "Christian Love." Workshops will study four aspects of this theme: loving God, loving creation, loving neighbours and loving self.

The purpose of the festival, according to organizers is "to create an opportunity for people of all faiths to celebrate and enrich their common Christian heritage."

Previous festivals were held in Ottawa in 1982 and Calgary in 1986.

Winning souls

When people become officers in The Salvation Army they have to sign a covenant. The *War Cry* of July 14 published the terms of this covenant — terms that are impressive because of their simplicity. The emphasis is on "winning souls" as the first great purpose in life; an emphasis that, even though we may not like the expression, puts many clergy in other denominations to shame.

Called by Almighty God to proclaim the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as an officer of The Salvation Army, I give myself to God and here and now bind myself to him in solemn covenant. I will love and trust him supremely so long as I live. I will live to win souls, and I will not allow anything to turn me aside from seeking their salvation as the *first* great purpose of my life. I will be true to the Salvation Army, its principles and doctrines, and by teaching and example prove myself to be a worthy and devoted follower of my Lord Jesus Christ.

Old Order lifestyle

A very interesting column in *Mennonite Reporter* is always "Old Order Voice," written by a member of the Old Order Mennonites. He informs us about the "horse and buggy people" and tells us about their history and beliefs. In the issue of June 25 he talks about the enormous advantages of the stable Old Order lifestyle over against the modern lifestyle of today's "high society."

Take my wardrobe for example. As long as my clothes are in decent shape, I wear them. They never grow out-of-date. My wife, too, wears dresses similar to those she wore 25 to 50 years ago.

When she does get a new dress (which she makes herself, of course), it will be similar in colour and style to her old one. I never need to buy a new buggy or horse just because the old one happened to be the wrong colour or style.

Our furniture is another example. Fifty years ago many people discarded the heavy, solid wood furniture in favour of new, lighter furniture manufactured in factories. The hardware on the new kind was plastic; the rest was veneer.

Today, that light-weight furniture is falling apart. The trend is a return to solid wood.

Unless the Old Order people stand firm, all their solid wood furniture will fall into the hands of the people who discarded it half a century ago.

Fifty years ago it was considered a luxury to eat in a restaurant. One heard of hotdogs and hamburgers, imagining them to be food fit for kings. Today, hamburgers are food for the common people.

A home-cooked, country meal is a luxury. If it consists of stone-ground whole wheat bread, with herbs and honey instead of sugar, it is still better. Here on the farm, we never strayed far from wholesome foods.

When the Old Order Mennonites build their new church, they will need to pay more than ever. But even with rising prices, it will likely cost less than $100,000 for a building to accommodate up to 500 people. There will be no towering steeple. No stained glass will decorate the windows. There will be no carpeting, wiring or plumbing. Every foot of the interior will be put to practical use.

Many people long to live as the Old Order Amish and Mennonites do, but they think it must be a hard life. For those of us who were born and raised under these conditions, there is nothing hard about it.

Consider what it takes to live in high society, the Old Order life seems easy and undemanding in comparison.

Jacob Kuntz is pastor of First Christian Reformed Church of Kitchener, Ont.

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Church

Canadian tourist on 'mercy mission' jailed in Havana

WOODSTOCK, Ont. (ASSIST Canada) — A Canadian tourist was arrested at Havana Airport in Cuba and held without charges for more than three days from June 24-28th.

Wally Featherston of Woodstock, Ont., was detained at Havana Airport minutes after arriving on a "mercy mission" to help Cuban churches. He heads ASSIST Canada, part of an international organization that links churches in the West with those in Cuba, Nicaragua and Romania.

Now back in Canada, Featherston says he is "shocked and disappointed" with the treatment he received from the Cuban authorities, especially as he was only there to visit Christians. "I went with goodwill in my heart and they did all they could to strip it away from me," he said. "Still, I love the Cuban people and especially the Christians there who have bravely lived out their faith in very difficult circumstances."

Featherston's arrest took place moments after he stepped off a flight from Toronto, on Sunday, June 24. "I was told to wait in a certain place by the immigration officers at the airport when suddenly four uniformed guards came and put me into an automobile," said Featherston. "No explanation was offered about my arrest and nothing was told me about what was happening."

Featherston, who was finally freed during the early hours of Thursday, June 28, said he was taken to what he described as an "ominous building" which he guessed was the headquarters of the Department of Immigration.

Speaking from his Woodstock home, Featherston stated, "The 12 cells were extremely small and held 32 prisoners. I discovered that most of them were African nationals from various countries and I speculated that they were people who the communist government had brought to Cuba for one reason or another and then had a falling out of some sort, and were now being deported."

The Canadian said he was given no access to his luggage and was held in conditions that he described as "foul, dirty and dark."

Ineffective consulate

Featherston asserted that the basement retaining area had "no working shower, no sink and two toilets that did not work." He said he continually asked permission to phone the Canadian Consulate in Havana but was refused each time.

"But somehow they were alerted to my plight and a representative appeared. Before hearing my story he told me, "We are in a communist country and they have the right to do whatever they want. We have nothing to say about it. I can do nothing to help you."

Featherston said that at 9 p.m. of the evening before his release, guards came to his cell and "I was deported on the condition that I pay for my own ticket." Featherston stated that the flight was to depart at approximately 2 a.m., June 28.

On a previous trip to Cuba, Featherston had visited several churches in the island and had apparently been followed by the secret police. When he arrived at the airport to leave he was harassed and then told that he had engaged in "illegal activities."

Featherston says that tourists should carefully evaluate the cost of visiting Cuba. "Cuba's inhuman handling of my case and that of the Africans I met in the cells indicates that any tourist to this country could be the target for an uncomfortable stay."

Veteran British Journalist Dan Wooding who founded ASSIST (Aiding Special Saints in Strategic Times), has been to Cuba on three occasions and commented, "The archaic communist government there is one of the last bastions of hard-line repressive Marxist-Leninism. Things must be desperate for Fidel if he has to resort to treating foreign Christians in this way, especially as Mr. Featherston was in Cuba on a mercy mission to bring encouragement to believers there."

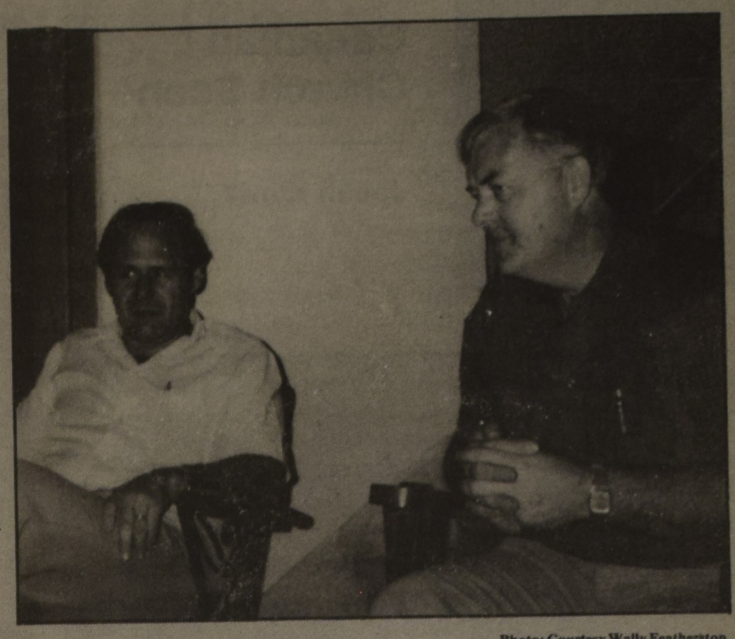

Photo: Courtesy Wally Featherston

Wally Featherston (r.) talks to a Cuban pastor in Cuba regarding a church LINKING program.

Vietnamese Christians permitted to build churches, but need pastors

HANOI, Vietnam (EP) — For years Vietnam has for the most part been a nation closed to Western influence, whether it be political, social, or religious ideology, or practical humanitarian aid. In recent months, however, while communist-controlled European countries have thrown the doors wide open to the West, communist Vietnam has slowly begun to crack open a window.

Some of the changes there include religious freedoms which have not been permitted in the atheist-dominated country for nearly two decades. Christians in Vietnam are now permitted, to some extent, to build churches and Bible schools with the permission of the government, but they are experiencing another problem. There is a shortage of pastors.

The Rev. Suguru Matsuki, pastor of Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, recently visited Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, where he said that although Christianity there is "setting off on a new course of development," there is a chronic lack of pastors, according to a report by Asia Lutheran Press Service.

Matsuki, who also works as executive secretary for international co-operation with the Tokyo-based National Council in Japan (NCCJ), visited the Evangelical Church of Hanoi. NCCJ, an ecumenical organization formed by mainline Protestant churches in Japan, planned to forge relationships with the church in North Vietnam.

Under the umbrella of the Evangelical Church are 20 congregations and about 10,000 members, Matsuki reported. But there are only five elderly pastors between them, all over the age of 70. "The moderator is 83 years old and is hospitalized," Matsuki said. "All of the pastors received their theological education in the 1930s."

Matsuki pointed out that the lack of pastors is a result of decades of political struggle in the coastal nation. In 1954, the Geneva Accords ended the war in Indochina between the French and the Viet Minh (the Vietnamese Communist group) by dividing the country into North and South Vietnam. Then in 1975, North Vietnamese troops captured Ho Chi Minh City, then Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam. All theological schools in the South have been closed since 1975, Matsuki said.

"Education for the pastorate was not recognized by the communist government in the North," he said. "Thus the number of pastors from the North decreased gradually."

Islamic hatred towards the West is part of 14 centuries of history

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Hostility and aggression against the West — and against the United States in particular — on the part of Islamic fundamentalists can be explained by looking at history, says Bernard Lewis, author of 20 books on Islam.

Lewis, a retired professor of history who specializes in Oriental and African studies, told an audience at the annual Jefferson Lecture in Washington in May that for 14 centuries Islam and Christianity have been at odds. During the first millennium, Islam was the more resilient of the two faiths, but more recently, Christianity has become dominant. For Moslems that situation has led to "humiliation — a growing awareness among the heirs of an old, proud, and for long dominant civilization, of having been overtaken, overborne, and overwhelmed by those whom they had long regarded as their inferiors."

Moslems see the entire worlds as divided between good and evil, not just in moral and religious arenas but in political, social, economic, and every other arena of life. Those who are outside the Islamic faith are part of "the House of War — which it is the duty of Moslems ultimately to bring to Islam," Lewis concluded.

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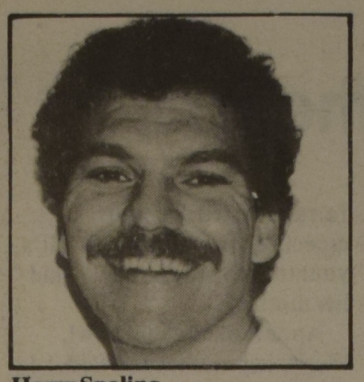
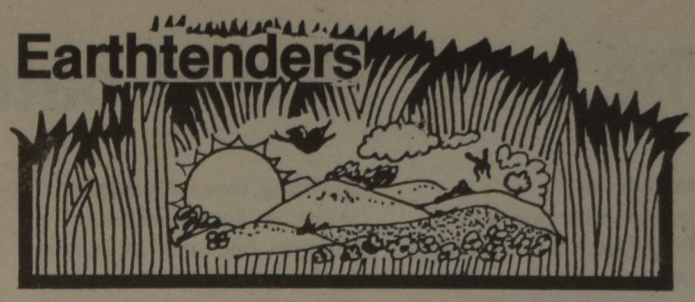
Worldviews and environmental stewardship



Harry Spaling



Our place and task in the environment

What we do with our environment is profoundly influenced by our attitude toward it. Our attitudes, in turn, are shaped by firmly held values and beliefs. Worldviews of individuals and the predominant worldview of a society determine how we use, manage, and preserve the environment.

The link between worldviews and environmental degradation was first popularized 23 years ago by Lynn White, a University of Chicago historian. White wrote an article in the respected magazine *Science* (March 10, 1967) tracing the origins of the ecological crisis to Judeo-Christian beliefs which, in his analysis, alienated human beings from nature and placed nature in a purely subservient role to be exploited by humans.

Christians are likely to react quickly to White's analysis, reinterpreting the Genesis commands to subdue the earth and multiply and referring to other scriptural references which point to the integrity and praise-worthiness of creation. Such thinking is evident in numerous articles and books by Christian writers such as Francis Schaeffer, Loren Wilkenson and Granberg-Michaelson.

No consensus

Despite the writings of Christian authors, the Christian camp is fragmented when it comes to linking worldviews and environmental stewardship. This fragmentation is evident in differing eschatologies (differing views of the future), particularly biblical interpretations of Christ's second coming, the human role in restoring God's Kingdom on earth and God's promise of a new creation.

Differing views of the future among Christians and their linkage to environmental stewardship is the subject of a recent article in the *Professional Geographer* (May 1990) written by Janel Curry-Roper, a geographer at Central University of Iowa. Two contrasting eschatologies held by conservative Protestants are summarized here.

One view of the future is dispensational premillennialism. In this view ecological deterioration is seen as a prophetic fulfilment along the historical timeline leading to Christ's return. Hope is limited to the spiritual realm while the physical world is doomed for destruction.

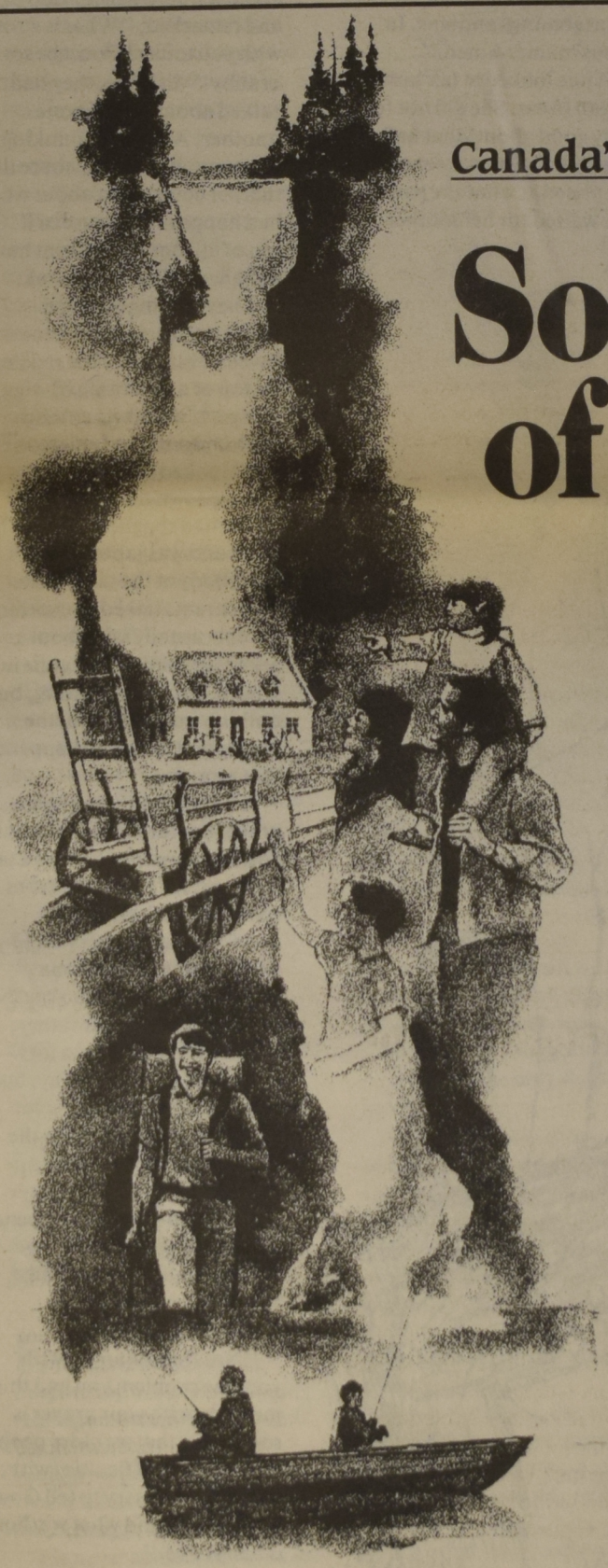
Such a dualistic worldview sees the future creation only in terms of a spiritual dimension and denies the redemption of the earth. Human responsibility emphasizes the saving of souls and preparation for the rapture. Human responsibility does not include environmental stewardship since it has no place in the history of redemption.

Stewardship part of redemption

A contrasting view of the future is amillennialism, a view more familiar to Reformed Calvinists. Here the Kingdom of God is seen as being evident in the present age but opposed by the Kingdom of Darkness. Christians have a responsibility to participate in the restoration of God's Kingdom but final restoration is reserved for Christ's return. Human participation in the restoration process is extended to all areas of creation, the physical and spiritual realms. Environmental stewardship is seen as an integral part of redemptive history.

Different views of the future are no guarantee that environmental stewardship in practice is more consistent with one view or the other. Adherents of a worldview linked to environmental stewardship, but not practitioners of it, need to narrow the gap between belief and action. Conversely, adherents of a worldview which does not include this link need to recognize how little they have to offer a world eagerly seeking ethical and religious solutions to global environmental problems.

Harry Spaling is a doctoral student in geography at the University of Guelph, Ont.



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SUMMER READING

The other side of oatmeal

Mins Reinsma

When Anne came down the steps she could smell it; oatmeal again. Every morning, well ... almost every morning, oatmeal, oatmeal, oatmeal. She disliked its smell, she hated its looks and always grimaced when she had to eat it. Everybody else had good things for breakfast, like rusks with sugar or really white bread with sweet things on top. Some even had an egg in the morning. When she talked to her mother about it, the answer was always, "Anne, we don't have money for that kind of thing. Oatmeal is better for you, and besides that, it's much cheaper."

When Anne entered the kitchen the table was already set. Willie, her little brother, was sitting in his highchair with a bowl of "oed." That's what he called the stuff. Willie ate anything, especially in the morning. Two bowls with oatmeal, one for Anne and one for her mother, were on the table. Of course, there was a bottle of milk and the sugar pot.

Anne went back to her room to get the book she had been reading and put it in her school bag. Maybe there would be a chance at school to finish it. When she was looking for the book her mother called, "Anne, come on, you are going to be late for school."

"I can't find my book," answered Anne rather loudly. "Look under the blankets and come on, let's eat."

Oh yes, there it was.

She went back to the kitchen and sat down. Anne looked at the oatmeal; she thought that it looked like wet cardboard. It just lay there. Rusks crackled in your mouth; boiled eggs were fun and tasted delicious, especially on white bread. "It's your turn to pray, Anne," said her mother.

Anne looked at her bowl, then at her mother and said, "I don't want to pray for oatmeal anymore."

Her mother looked at her, rather surprised, and said softly, "Then I will." She prayed, "Dear Lord, we thank you for this new day, we thank you for this food on our table. Be with Daddy in the field today, be with Anne at school, with all the children, and especially with the teachers. We ask for forgiveness of shortcomings and sins. In Jesus' name. Amen."

Anne looked at her bowl and began to eat. She did not feel very good about what had happened. She was somewhat surprised at what she had done; she waited for her mother to say something, but her mother didn't. Anne didn't say anything either. After they had finished their food, she packed her school bag and kissed her mother good-bye. Finally her mother said, "I want you to think about what you did, or rather, what you did not do this morning; we will talk about it when Daddy is home tonight."

School that day was not very good; she did poorly in arithmetic, which was unusual. Two times in one lesson she had spelled "beautiful" wrong, and then there was the quarrel about a stupid pencil. Betsy had remarked, "What is wrong with you today? Don't be so crabby!" In Bible, they had talked about love for one another. Anne kept thinking about oatmeal; well, not really that, of course, but about what had happened because of it. On top of all that, she did not have a chance to finish her book.

That evening they had spaghetti for dinner. Anne loved it, especially the red sauce on top of a mountain of wiggly things. It was like a volcano exploding; the little pieces of meat looked like large rocks rolling down the mountain. Willie had spaghetti all over his front and was jabbering to everybody at the same time. Her parents talked about things parents usually talk about and asked how things had gone in school. Anne was waiting, but nothing was said about the prayer and what had happened that morning.

After Bible reading and prayer her father said, "Annie, you know we should have a talk together; let's go to the front room after the dishes are done." When she was helping with the dishes Anne was thinking about what to say. She was not afraid of her father. She loved her parents a lot — most of the time, anyway, but what could she say ...?

When Anne came into the front room her father said, "Come, sit by me. Your mother told me what happened this morning."

Anne looked at her Dad. "Are you angry with me, Daddy?" she asked.

"No, I'm not angry with you; the problem you had this morning with your prayer is something that we older people have a lot of difficulties with, too. We always try to tell God what we like and what we think is best for us."

"I really didn't mean to ... I just ... I just ...." She was almost crying.

"I know, Sweetheart, you had enough oatmeal for awhile, but that is not the point at the moment. Let's make up a story and see if that will help.

"Let's say, next month on your birthday, Grandma De Groot will send you a birthday card and a package. When you open the package, you will find a beautiful book about elves, and besides that, a box of coloured pencils for art class and a purple sweater."

"Oh, Daddy, she would never do that, she knows I hate purple."

"Well let's say she forgot that you dislike purple. What would you write in your thank-you note?"

Anne frowned a little and said, "I could write a thank-you for the book and the coloured pencils and even for the sweater; or I could not mention the sweater at all."

Her father smiled a little and said, "You could also write: 'Thank you for thinking of me, Grandma, and for the beautiful presents.'"

Anne looked at her dad, "Yes, that would be the best."

"You see, Anne, we sometimes tell God that we have no use for what he has given us at the time."

"Like the rain, Daddy?"

"Yes, like the rain sometimes. All of us want to make up our own gift package because we think that we know best what we need or want when, really, only God knows what is best. Remember, some people don't want Jesus either, they do not see the need for him, and he is the greatest gift God has ever given us," her dad explained.

Anne's mother had come into the room and was listening to the conversation. Anne looked at her and said, "Do I have to love oatmeal, Mother?"

"No dear, we may find some things difficult to enjoy, but we may not say to God, 'I want to thank you only for the things I like.'"

When Anne's mother had gone back to the kitchen, her father said, "There is one more thing; this is just between you and me. Come, sit close."

He then looked at Anne, smiled a little and said, "Your Daddy does not care for oatmeal very much either."

Anne looked at her dad in surprise. "Oh, Daddy ... really? You never told me!"

She then put her arms around his neck and said, "That *is* funny, Daddy; really funny ...."

Mins Reinsma operated a jewelry store in Seattle, Washington, for 25 years.

Lothar's flight to freedom

Lini R. Grol

I'll never forget Lothar. He was a 12-year-old Jewish boy who in 1938 had fled on foot from his home in Berlin, hoping to find a safe shelter with his mother's family in Amsterdam.

But when he arrived at his uncle's house in Amsterdam, starved and exhausted, the family had already fled to America.

The hastily contacted Jewish community took care of Lothar and brought him to a seaside children's home in Petten to recover from his terrible ordeal. Petten is a small town north of Alkmaar, the Netherlands, where at that time I was a student nurse.

Lothar was brought to the children's pavilion where I worked. He had only a throat infection and high fever. Normally such a child was sent home, but there was no home for Lothar; and to prevent an epidemic of infected throats among these vulnerable children, Lothar was sent to our hospital.

He didn't understand Dutch; he spoke only German. Because of his high fever he was delirious.

Lothar was wild and tried to escape, yelling, "I don't want to die." At that time no one had died from an infected throat.

Doctor Bartstra, one of our few female doctors, was Jewish. She understood Lothar's emotional condition. "You will have to be extremely patient with this boy," she told us. "He's had a terrible time. He lost his parents and grandparents, and those friends he had once trusted let him down. Now he is lonely and confused. It will do him good to talk about his past with a sympathetic listener."

She decided that I was to be Lothar's special nurse and suggested that I sit with Lothar all day until he was recovered. She hoped that talking out his grief and frustrations would enable him to accept the future and cope with life, knowing he was safe in Holland. We all felt sorry for Lothar when she told us what she had heard from the Jewish community who had taken care of him.

He was a frail boy with large brown eyes, a narrow pale face and black curly hair. He tossed and turned wildly, furiously hammering his bed and crying, "I don't want to die." After the sedation took effect he calmed down, but a fear of death still haunted him.

After a little coaxing he told me about himself. He was an only child. He raved about the razzias in Berlin, but his eyes became soft when he spoke about his mother and father. He grew angry again when he told about their forced move from the obviously well-to-do suburbs of Berlin with several servants and a gardener to a one-bedroom apartment in a ghetto.

Obviously he had suffered when he saw his mother's despair and depression.

She had told him about her youth and the pogroms and her fear that the same would happen now the Nazis had started to persecute the Jews. Daily she had pleaded with his father to leave Germany to go to her brother who lived in ever-so-safe Holland.

Lothar's father seemingly was optimistic. He always said that pogroms would never be held in Germany and that he did not want to leave his homeland. He had comforted his wife and Lothar, saying, "We have so many good friends in Germany. They'll take care and find us a decent place to live till this madness is over." He had assured them, "This will not last long."

Again I saw fury and fear in Lothar's eyes as he burst out in the middle of his talk about home and his parents. "I don't want to die. They killed my mother and father ... I don't want to die." He jumped out of bed and clung to me sobbing. "Help me. Help me. I don't want to die."

I smiled and hugged him. "Don't be afraid, Lothar. You are safe here in Holland. No Nazi is ever going to hurt you. As soon as you are better you'll go for a while to the children's home to get strong. It will be such fun at the beach with the other children."

But he hardly listened and cried repeatedly, "I'll die. I'll die. Why don't you believe me?"

Doctor Bartstra blamed this strange obsession with death on the emotional trauma of his experiences. Maybe it was the shock and disappointment he felt when he found himself lost and alone in Amsterdam. With every exhausting outburst he had to have another sedation before he calmed down.

For several days I sat with him and listened to his outpouring as he relived and related his memories. Many of the memories of his earlier years were good, but those of recent times were heart wrenching to listen to.

He never smiled, not even in his calm moments. He did not respond like the other children to my little jokes or gentle teasing.

Only 12 years old, he had aged far beyond his years. When his fever abated, I tried in vain to play children's games with him. When I asked if he played games, he said with a listless shrug, "Yes I played chess with father or Johan, my tutor." When I suggested that he teach me, he only shook his head.

At times I felt helpless. There was so little I could do for him. I was almost glad when he went on talking about his life as a little boy, his kind Nanny, and all he had seen on his travels around Europe with his parents. Theirs had been a happy life before the move into the ghetto.

It was the eighth day of Lothar's stay in the hospital. That day he had not once cried out that he was going to die. Secretly I rejoiced, believing that Lothar was finally over his depression and would soon be well, physically as well as mentally.

Excited about his progress I hurried to tell my head nurse and fellow nurses. We were happy for him. They all had been concerned about Lothar.

As always, before going off duty I prepared Lothar for the night. When I left him he always responded with a polite but listless, "Good night, nurse."

This time when I tucked the blankets around his narrow shoulders, his small hand stole up from under the blankets to fold over my head. He held me tight. Then, looking up to me, he smiled when he said, "Thank you, nurse. Now everything is all right."

I was surprised at his gesture and remark, but even more at the peaceful, almost happy expression that brightened his eyes and face. He was a handsome boy, but now there was joy in his eyes which made him strangely beautiful.

My heart felt light when I ran to the head nurse and the others to tell them about Lothar's great improvement. "Lothar is absolutely better, you can see it in his eyes." They laughed at my excitement about this glimmer of hope.

The head nurse warned me, "It's maybe only a sign of improvement. Depressions like his take time. Don't expect miracles."

But I did, and insisted, "He has been different all day long." Then I went off duty and to my room, feeling happy that my nursing, maybe in a small way, had led to his recovery.

I had not even changed from my uniform when the phone rang. It was my head nurse who told me that Lothar had died.

The autopsy did not show a cause for his death. We'll never know how Lothar knew that he was going to die. But I am still glad to know that he died in peace.

In retrospect I think that he was spared a far worse fate. For a few years later we found out how cruel the Nazis really were.

Lini Grol is a scissor-cutting artist and free-lance writer living in Fonthill, Ont. She writes in both Dutch and English.

Feature

A flavour of the Philippines

Tim Penning

Staring at the plush, forest-green carpeting and chandeliered splendor of Malacanang Palace, my mind started to wander. I thought of the plain brown carpeting and dull fluorescent lighting in the offices of Christian Reformed World Missions at the CRCNA offices in Grand Rapids, Mich. I was a long way from that place now — as far as half a globe and 14 time zones to be exact.

Photo: C.C. files

"People were rejoicing over the discovery of a half-eaten piece of fruit, a dog-eared book or a soiled article of clothing."

I was in the Philippines this Monday morning in March as a production assistant on a documentary crew making a film about the work of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) and Christian Reformed World Missions in the Philippines. The film assignment marked my first venture beyond the borders of North America. It was also the first time in my short journalism career that I would interview a world leader.

President Corazon Aquino came in promptly at 10:30 a.m., which was 9:30 p.m. the previous Sunday in Grand Rapids, and spent a half hour with us. She spoke of her appreciation for American missionaries and at the same time cautioned foreigners (this was the first time I was called a foreigner to my face) to stay out of politics. She also mentioned the role her spiritual life played in her decision to run for president of the Philippines and she exhibited a great deal of pride in "People Power," the grass roots movement that brought her to power in 1986. (See "Aquino Q & A)

I was impressed with the elegance of the palace and was admittedly surprised to notice that cities like bustling Manila have McDonald's restaurants, 7-11 stores, shopping malls, movie theatres and other signs of Americanization. Traffic patterns, however, are different from those in North America. The 18-year-old Filipino who was our driver through most of the trip taught us a great deal about Manila traffic — lane markers and stop signs are really only suggestions, and honking your horn is considered a courteous advance warning of your maneouvring, not an angry reaction to someone else's. I also observed many sights that matched my typical stereotype of a mission field in a Third World country: rice fields, farmers on oxen-like carabao and the proverbial grass hut.

Filipinos proved to be a very friendly people wherever we went on the three islands we visited out of the 7,000 in the archipelago. They frequently shout out, "Hey Joe!" to us and any Anglo-Saxon face, since anyone of that colour is an "Americano" to them. "Joe" is a holdover from World War II when Filipinos called any and every American soldier "GI Joe." Among themselves they are a remarkably friendly and happy people as well, placing greater emphasis on personal relationships than material things. I was struck by the fact that it is quite often materialism that breaks down relationships in North America.

The relationship of the Christian Reformed Church with the Philippines began in 1962 when World Missions developed a new church in a rural community on Negros Island. Today there are 24 congregations in the Christian Reformed Church of the Philippines (CRCP), and more than 20 Christian Reformed families from North America are assisting this sister denomination in evangelism and development.

Mission work not for the timid

Church work isn't always in a church, however. We visited a section of Manila called "Smoky Mountain" for its huge, smoldering pile of trash. Amid, and even on top of, such vast collections of Third-World waste, hundreds of Filipinos live and try to make a living salvaging what they think they can re-sell on the street for a few pesos. The stench was so bad that we all wore filter masks, but I still nearly gagged from what I saw.

People were rejoicing over the discovery of a half-eaten piece of fruit, a dog-eared book or a soiled article of clothing. Even school-aged children participate in this occupation, roaming barefoot with backs bent out of cruel necessity to help feed themselves and their families.

After our visit I doused my old Nikes in Lysol to eradicate the permeating odor, it was no use. At the end of the trip I left those shoes in the waste basket of our hotel, and now I wonder if some scavenger found the right shoe, and another found the left, and sold them separately on the streets of Manila.

In one such dump, CRWRC helped the residents build a health centre so that government doctors would have a place to examine people. Filipinos who work with CRWRC conduct health seminars at the centre to help people prevent the cholera that used to kill up to five children a week. The people named the centre *Nagpayong*, a Tagalog word meaning "umbrella" or "shade," because of the relief and dignity they have gained in bettering their own condition.

CRWRC also works in more picturesque urban areas and rural communities. The residents of Paco Beach on Negros Island have a soothing view of the Sulu Sea but they have very poor sanitation. CRWRC missionaries and Filipinos employed by the agency have provided loans and helped construct latrines here. In one rural farming community, 7,500 malnourished children are nearing normal weight because of a program to educate mothers about nutrition. In the province of Pangasinan, which means "place of salt" and is named for the salt water which covers half of the province, CRWRC helped begin an oyster farm to supplement the income of fishermen who struggle to make ends meet. One Filipino working with CRWRC told me that many Filipino families live below the poverty line, which is 4,600 pesos ($23 U.S.) per month. So the agency is helping the people work toward self-sufficiency by setting up income generation projects such as pig-raising and craft-making.

'Christian' nation

With CRWRC busy with the "deed" portion of the ministry, World Missions focuses more on the "Word." The Philippines is considered the only Christian nation in Asia because Spanish priests came and began Catholic churches already in the 1500s, but missionaries told me that many of the people still do not have a knowledgeable faith. In fact, many people think the Trinity is Mary, Joseph and Jesus. I was at first impressed with slogans like "God Bless Our Trip" on people's jeepneys, the popular mode of transportation. Businesses also bear signs of Christian influence, such as Emmanuel Muffler Shop or Holy Spirit Pharmacy. At first it appeared as if these people were quite a spiritual bunch, highly evangelical and bearing witness constantly. But I soon learned that such religious slogans are really just good luck charms and don't represent a sincere belief. The people are really still animistic, having simply added the Roman Catholic saints to the spirits of the forest they have worshipped for generations.

But the Philippines is a very literate society despite its Third-World status, and this makes the Bible a powerful tool when printed in one of the numerous languages and dialects of the country. The Roman Catholic Church in the Philippines only recently allowed its parishioners to read the Bible on their own, likely as a response to the growth of evangelical churches in the country. Several missionaries have had the blessing of seeing people cry when they have read the Bible for the first time.

The church in the Philippines is also very interested in the *Heidelberg Catechism* because it is so relevant to what is happening there. I was both amused and moved to see copies of the *Heidelberg Catechism* in the Tagalog language at a Bible study in a poverty-stricken section of Manila. The cramped, second floor room that reminded me of a treehouse on my aunt's farm serves as a home for four and is the meeting site of the Bible study group. Standing in the dim, humid facility, missionary Henry Steen shared his own excitement for the catechism.

Pre-Reformation Catholicism

"Roman Catholicism here is pre-Reformation Catholicism and the questions and answers of our catechism are really related to the issues of the day here," he explained. "For example, obeying the Ten Commandments out of gratitude is a new concept to them, and they're glad to hear what the Bible teaches about that."

On another island, in another city, on the fourth floor of an old warehouse, I watched a young Filipino named Joel Gumban become ordained into the ministry. As missionaries and a Filipino pastor laid hands on Joel I thought about the fishing village we had seen earlier where Joel grew up. I realize that this young church leader will not make headlines around the world for this decision to be a pastor, but after the service when he asked me about our interview with President Aquino, I told him I was more impressed with his decision to serve the Kingdom of God.

After three weeks of visiting work sites through the three islands where our mission works, we have enough footage to put together a decent film. We had exposed thousands of feet of film, not to mention our hearts, minds and ignorant stereotypes about this beautiful country. With the film, cases of equipment and a month's-worth of life-long memories, we boarded a plane for home. In a matter of hours I was flying into Grand Rapids. As the plane started its descent I tried to spot familiar sites from the air. I noticed my parents' house, picked out the CRC building, and identified the streams of orderly traffic on the city's major streets. It was amazing how small everything looked from my window seat.

Continued on page 15 ...

Film crew interview with President Corazon Aquino

... continued from page 14.

Edited by Tim Penning

Tim Penning, a media officer for Christian Reformed World Missions, travelled to the Philippines last spring to make a documentary film about the work of Christian Reformed mission and relief work in that country. On March 5, 1990, the film crew of which Penning was production assistant, interviewed Philippine President Corazon Aquino. The (edited) interview follows.

Film crew: Given that we are addressing this film to a Christian audience in particular, we're interested to know: What role did your Christian faith play initially in your decision to run for election in 1986?
President Aquino: I would say a large part or the greater part of my decision was really based on my faith in God. And, in fact, when I had informed my children about my decision, four out of five of them were saying "haven't we suffered enough?" And I explained to them that we have been truly blessed, we have received so many more blessings than 90 or 95 per cent of our people, and it's not as if we can just accept these blessings and given nothing in return. So I was telling them that maybe this is what is being asked of us, that because we have been blessed not only materially but I would like to believe spiritually, then it is up to us also to share these blessings with our people.

Crew: Why do your opponents, if they truly want to be friends of democracy, seek to use force to overthrow this government?
President Aquino: I've always said that I am against violence. In fact when my husband returned to this country (from exile in the United States) he echoed Mahatma Ghandi's line on the willing sacrifice of the innocent is the best response against tyranny. He too believed in peaceful means, so I have always advocated that we should exhaust all peaceful efforts before we resort to force. It's a pity that some countrymen of ours say they are for democracy yet have to use force and violence. I suppose they are not really for democracy in the sense that they just want to instil fear in the hearts of our people.

I've always been for the elections as the means to change the leadership of the country. In 1984, when we had elections for parliament, there was a vision among the opposition of which I was a part then. Some of us were thinking it would not be good to participate in the elections because Marcos would manipulate them and, in fact, we would be lending credibility to the elections. But I believe the election in spite of some of its defects is still the only option within which to change the leadership by peaceful means. So I opted for participation and fortunately we were able to get almost one-third of the members of parliament elected coming from the opposition. So it was a good try, and when I was asked whether I was for participation or boycott I came out very openly for participation. It also gave us the opportunity to inform our countrymen about the situation in our country.

Crew: There is an historic friendship between Americans and Filipinos. How do you view the work of evangelical North Americans who come to your country to support the growth of Philippine churches as well as sharing their relief and development expertise?
President Aquino: I'm certainly very grateful for their sharing with us, and certainly it's not only I but the people who appreciate what they are doing here in so far as helping us with relief and also sharing with us our beliefs. This is very important and I certainly welcome North American missionaries coming here.

Crew: You don't see them as outsiders bothering your internal affairs?
President Aquino: No. So long as they stay out of politics I guess it's OK.

Crew: The gospel does have political ramifications. Should expatriate Christian missions support democratic reform or stay totally neutral in all affairs political?
President Aquino: With regard to democracy I think they should support our democratic reforms because it is very important that we preserve and strengthen this democracy. So where democratic reforms are concerned I do not object to their participation.

Crew: What advice would you give to North Americans who wish to be involved in this country in the areas of missions and humanitarian services?
President Aquino: I hesitate giving advice to non-Filipinos because at the same time Filipinos do not accept too readily advice given by foreigners. Let me just say that certainly I appreciate all of the foreigners who come here, and there are quite a number who are sincere in their desire to help our people. I think so long as we respect each other and believe that we are all children of God and should help each other, that is as far as I would like to go. Maybe if I were not president I would be freer in giving advice.

I have had contact with people in the Peace Corps in the early '60s when my husband was governor. They were able to understand Filipinos better by living with them and helping them with their problems. So I believe that it's not important to think of whether we are Americans or Filipinos — even though we are proud to be Filipinos and you are proud to be Americans — I think what is important is that we all belong to one world and certainly we all believe in the same God, so that should help us in understanding each other and trying to help each other in the best way we can. And while it is true that we are a developing country, I think there are still quite a number of things we could share, and we could, in fact, help not only Americans but other countries as well. I'm very proud of the fact that in so many of the countries that have recently returned to democracy, many times it is written up in the newspapers or for television that the Philippines led the way or set the example for restoration of democracy through peaceful means.

Crew: We hear a lot about the Pacific Rim lately. Is Japan going to be the dominant country in the Philippines?
President Aquino: Well, Japan happens to be the biggest foreign donor now insofar as the Philippines is concerned and I'm very grateful for that. Because of the fact that both Japan and the Philippines belong to Asia there is perhaps the feeling that we are more alike. We do not think of isolating ourselves though. I keep telling our people to reach out to as many friendly countries as possible, and, especially where trade and investments are concerned, I reach out to other countries so that it will not only be to the benefit of the Philippines but to all alike. I would hope that this would be the wave of the future, that more and more countries will be able to relate to each other and be able to help each other.

Crew: As you look back over four years in office what would you say is your most significant accomplishment so far?
President Aquino: The restoration of our freedoms and democracy, because when we were in the opposition it seemed almost an impossible task to restore freedom and democracy given that we were up against such a powerful dictator. In fact, many people refer to the four-day revolution on Edsa (Edsa Boulevard in Manila) as a miracle. I think this is one of the few times when people were out in the streets praying; there were many priests and nuns and the statue of the Blessed Mary was brought out and many people were praying the rosary and singing hymns. I myself, when I went to Edsa, sang the "Our Father" in Filipino together with the crowds who were there.

Photo: Tim Penning

Philippines President Corazon Aquino responds to a question from film director John Hamilton.

In fact, when we started our compaign someone suggested to me that maybe we could have a minute of silent prayer. And I said sometimes the silent prayer bit doesn't work out too well because other people are still talking. I told them I would prefer to sing the "Our Father," and we did. This was really unusual in an election campaign but I felt it was what we needed most. And so the entire crowd of maybe 100,000 were singing the "Our Father."

Crew: What are your predictions for the future?
President Aquino: I am not seeking re-election in 1992, although I've been asked that more than 50 times. The fact that I became president was certainly not my ambition in the past. I was the wife of a politician and during my husband's incarceration we were not even thinking of returning to politics. All we were hoping and praying for was that our country would be able to live again under democracy and under freedom. So what we have been able to accomplish has been greater than my expectations, but we know that a lot more has to be done. I think I can continue to serve our country even in a private capacity.

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Issue

Can the Reformed community tolerate the Christian Labour Association?

Ed Grootenboer

On various occasions in the past few months, the name of the Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) has been referred to in the pages of *Calvinist Contact* (Feb. 2, 23; March 9, 23 issues) in relation to a union for Christian school teachers. CLAC did not initiate that discussion which presented two people's opinions on the merits of CLAC organizing and representing said teachers. Although I unavoidably will have to deal with Reinder Klein's and Hank Hultink's (differing) opinions, the reason for writing this article is broader than the issue they have raised.

Prior questions must be posed and dealt with before we can realistically deal with the idea of a union representing Christian teachers. There are questions such as: What is the purpose of CLAC and how can it fulfil that purpose within the Christian community? And why are there such strong anti-union sentiments in the community that is represented by *Calvinist Contact* readers? Quite frankly, I don't have all the answers, but I would like to publicly discuss these matters because they are important for CLAC, and possibly also for Reformed Christian education efforts across Canada.

Reformed Christians always have (or ought to have) understood that the gospel and its demonstration of the renewal worked by Jesus Christ have an impact far beyond the gift of personal salvation. The gospel first of all convinces us of atonement for ourselves, but then opens up all of life to the powerful influence of the Kingdom of God and its righteousness.

That this understanding has gone awry under the banners of social gospel and liberation theology does not weaken its currency. The Bible has a profound and timely message for all of daily life and human activities (family, work, politics, education, agriculture, etc.). The establishment of Christian education facilities, from kindergarten to the post-graduate level, is but one of the fruits of putting into practice that "Kingdom vision."

CLAC, of course, also comes out of and stands squarely in the Reformed understanding of the all-encompassing claim of Christ's victory, which gives us the possibility to positively affect the workplace and labour relations. This conviction is no different, nor more radical, than the vision which supports Reformed Christian education efforts. CLAC aims to bring wholeness and harmony to the workplace and promote just and right ways of living and working. In short, "We wish to heal what's broken, and justice to regain." ("Workers' Song," by Frank De Vries)

Accordingly, CLAC's purposes and aims are unequivocally spelled out in its Constitution:

... *To organize workers ... for the purpose of propagating, establishing and maintaining justice in the sphere of labour and industry, and promoting the economic, social and moral interests of the workers through the practical application of Christian principles in collective bargaining and other means of mutual aid or protection.* (Article 3, Constitution of the Christian Labour Association of Canada)

Clearly, this is a union. But just as clearly, this is not a union that wants to participate in a class struggle or bring alienation between workers and their employers by engaging in the adversary system of labour relations, because the previous article, Article 2, states: "The CLAC bases its program and activities on the Christian principles of social justice and love as taught in the Bible."

Alternative to false ideologies

The above and other constitutional principles, amplified and practically defined in the Constitution's Supplements A and B, set CLAC apart on the Canadian labour scene. This is not by design or to impart perfection (many of the members and employers we deal with know differently). CLAC was formed in 1952 and continues to exist because it believes that Christian principles offer the only meaningful alternative to the false ideologies which tend to turn the workplace into a battleground and labour relations into shades of warfare.

In a very real sense CLAC is an instrument of the Christian community. Its mandate is to pose and put into practice positive, Christian alternatives to all the "isms" and ideologies that negatively affect the workplace because they deny the reality of God. To be sure, that does not mean that CLAC is an organism of a church or denomination. Far from it. CLAC is an independent labour movement and trade union, responsible to its members. In its representation work, CLAC challenges both labour and management to be responsible to and for each other, as well as to society; and it fosters mutual co-operation, avenues of communication and obedience to biblical norms of justice, the dignity of the individual and the welfare of the work community.

Thankfully, many Christians see the importance of CLAC and support it actively. Still, there are many more who do not. And turning to one of the questions posed earlier, a good number of those who do not support CLAC have chosen that course deliberately because they are opposed to the idea and the existence of trade unions in general, and a Christian trade union in particular.

There are many reasons for this viewpoint, not the least of which is the bad experiences many have had with unions that abuse their members, employers and the public alike. However, such experiences do not explain the fact that many Christian workers (who may even be CLAC general workers local members) and Christian employers shudder at the prospect of CLAC's presence in their workplace. Why is this?

Ironic support of individualism

I think it is because, as Reformed Christians, we somehow prefer to stress the worth of the individual at the expense of the work community. In many ways the secular preference for the pre-eminence of individual rights seems to fit better with us than the well-being of the group. Therefore, terms such as "collective bargaining" and "solidarity" tend to be dismissed as being "undemocratic" and "socialist."

I do not wish to get into specifics on this. Let it suffice to observe that too many Reformed Christians (employees as well as employers) tend to approach the areas of work and economic activity with an excess of enthusiasm for the free enterprise and capitalist position. I should hasten to add that CLAC too believes that the free operation of business and the free flow of capital are essential for the development of a sound economy. Recent disclosures from Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R. only serve to publicly underscore the bankruptcy of notions about state-controlled economies. Even Sweden's high degree of socialism is based on wealth created by private enterprise and ownership. This is not the time or the place to debate capitalism verses socialism. It should only be noted that both are extremes which ignore important concepts of justice for individuals and groups in society.

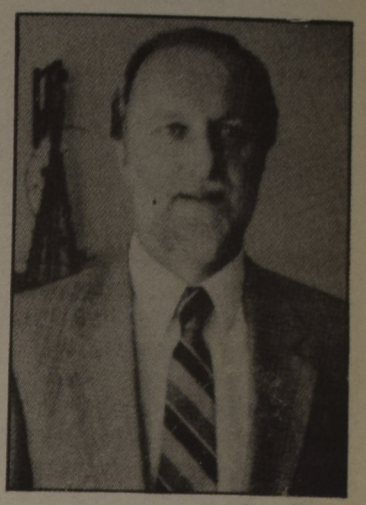

Photo: C.C. files

Ed Grootenboer

Generally, free enterprises and exponents of capitalism oppose the formation and organizing of unions, but if they must be dealt with *then it is* best to do so at arm's length via the adversary system. I suspect that this viewpoint underlies much of the misgivings about unions (including CLAC) in Reformed circles. Unions are seen as a threat to the power and authority of management. And in the popular beliefs about free enterprise, the owners, the providers of capital and their agents must have absolute control and authority over the workplace and the workers. Any suggestions to the contrary are met with statements such as, "If you don't like how things are done here, there's the door." Or, "It's my business and I'll run it as I please." Such reactions to requests to establish a labour-management committee, to discuss safe working conditions, or to take another look at how or if an errant employee should be disciplined, are indicative of authoritarianism and a deep-seated resentment toward anyone who would dare to question it.

Employers, employees not infallible

Under such circumstances, unions are seen as an evil to be avoided at all costs. Should the employees get fed up enough and do the unthinkable, i.e.,

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Izaak de Rijcke, B.Sc., LL.B., O.L.S.
barrister and solicitor
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How do you feel about the CLAC?

... continued from page 16.

bring in a union, representation is difficult at best, and at worst deteriorates into a power struggle which benefits no one.

And what about the progressive work places? Cannot a sincere Christian employer do well by his or her employees without a union, even a well-meaning one such as CLAC? That can indeed be done, for a time at least. The problem is that I have yet to encounter a perfect group of employees or an infallible employer (or a faultless union for that matter). Both employees and employers make mistakes or errors in judgment, and they inevitably run into areas in which their respective interests conflict, no matter how clearly responsibilities are defined. The solution, then, is not an arbitrary decision in favour of one or the other (usually in favour of the employer). Conflicts are not resolved that way, they are simply put off, and that builds resentment.

Harmony in the workplace requires co-operative labour relations through the functioning of a well-informed and responsible union. The workplace and the relationship between employees and their employer need the services of a professional agency to deal with conflict, help clear up mistakes and create a co-operative work community in which all opinions are heard and dealt with.

As well, it should be emphasized that employers need a union (assuming the union is an enlightened one) as much as the employees. Such a union will serve to represent the collective needs and input of the employees to the employer on matters affecting the workplace, production, the content of the work, distribution of income, etc. Such a union will also take into consideration the interest of the whole enterprise by dealing objectively and compassionately, for example, with the errors and omissions of employees via progressive disciplinary procedures — and ultimately by working out a mutually acceptable resolution to difficult employment relationships.

Union representation will provide open appeal procedures to ensure that fair and just decisions are made based on existing standards of employment law and principles of justice. In this the union serves the whole work community as an advocate for employees and as a communication link and buffer between the two different (interest) groups in the workplace.

Perhaps an analogy will help to illustrate what I am saying, although like all analogies, this one has its limits. Consider the consequences of a system of government without the intervening and mediating hand of an independent judicial system. We can all name examples of how the governed in this type of a political environment suffer abuse, without redress or appeal. Or conversely, without the rule of law to back it up, the government is in a perpetual state of instability and subject to being overthrown if it does not satisfy the whims of the most vocal groups of citizens. Either way, such a system does not meet our standards for ensuring justice and having an orderly relationship between the government and the population at large.

Need mediating body

We need the rule of law, as guaranteed in legislation and enforced by the judiciary, to provide orderly and expected conduct on the part of everyone and to make sure that everyone lives up to his or her responsibilities within the rules laid down. The government (as well as the governed) needs the checks and balances provided by an intervening agency, otherwise there will be either a drift toward dictatorship or anarchy. We would not dream of organizing our society without the mediating influence (authority, if you will) of the courts. History has shown that the ideals of both a benevolent dictatorship and full participatory democracy are beyond the scope of human capabilities. The reality is that there are too many distractions and temptations which undermine the resolve to do and be only good.

Yet in the workplace in employer-employee relations, we think (pretend?) that it is possible to operate without checks or balances. Is a mediating and intervening agency here not highly desirable, if not absolutely necessary for a good outcome? Surely if there is a desire to have the best possible work environment where the possibilities of fairness, justice and freedom are maximized, where the abdication of duties and responsibilities on the part of employees (and their employer, too) is actively discouraged, where the abuse or the lack of proper authority lines is addressed, and where there is a sense of communal respect between those who produce and those who plan and direct, then a Christianly motivated union is an indispensable ingredient. Such union activity will not be antagonistic but have a positive, facilitating influence.

Finally, the difference of opinion between Reinder Klein and Hank Hultink in the matter of a union for Christian teachers is more apparent than real. It is evident from Mr. Hultink's letter in the March 23 issue of *Calvinist Contact*, that as far as he is concerned, the issue is not whether or not Ontario's Christian teachers should belong to a union, but, rather, which union: OCSTA or CLAC. I don't think he should dismiss the possibility of joint or co-operative action. That, of course, brings into question the whole matter of professional associations metamorphosing into unions. But that is something for the members of OCSTA to deal with and decide on. CLAC does not wish to get involved in that debate, nor argue with Mr. Hultink's bold contention that OCSTA can do whatever CLAC could do for teachers and for the boards involved.

Maybe it *is* broken

Still, personally, as a parent with children in the Christian school system and as a supporter of Christ-centred education, I have reasons to be concerned about the status quo. At the risk of being accused of bias, I want to lay all the cards on the table for the readers because the proper operation of our Christian schools is at stake.

Individual CLAC staff members and CLAC itself have been and continue to be sought out for participation in labour relations matters by both OACS (the association of school boards) and members of OCSTA (the association of teachers). Various CLAC offices are receiving an increasing number of calls from teachers seeking advice about their employment situation. School boards are finding it increasingly difficult to deal with teachers and other employees in the growing complexity of legal requirements and employment law. And every year more experienced teachers are leaving the Christian school system for one reason or another while the lineup of young people training for Christian education positions grows shorter year by year. These are not positive indicators of a healthy teacher employment environment. To paraphrase Mr. Hultink, maybe it "ain't broke," but certainly some fixing is in order. I encourage OCSTA and OACS in their efforts to do that.

As far as CLAC is concerned, I want to report that its national board and staff council reluctantly decided some time ago, well before the publication of Mr. Klein's Feb. 2 article, to not actively pursue or promote at this time becoming the representative of Christian school teachers. CLAC could be persuaded to change its mind on this. However, given the present attitude in the school support community, as I've tried to explain, we felt that this would be the better part of wisdom.

It is left open for debate at this juncture whether any union would be able to act as an equal and independent partner in the Christian school system. And whether that union shall be OCSTA, CLAC, or a combination of these two organizations is not for us to say. That should be left to the teachers to freely decide.

Ed Grootenboer is executive director of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.

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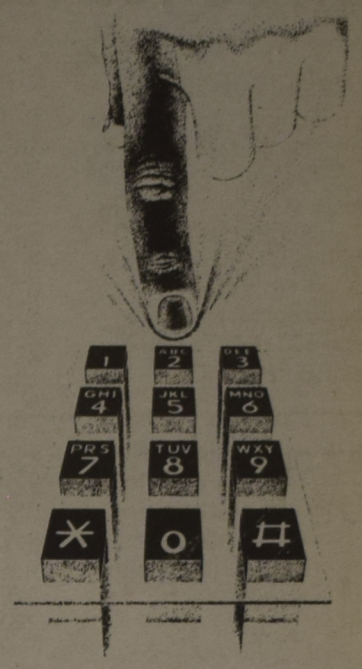

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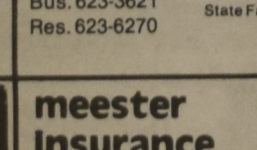
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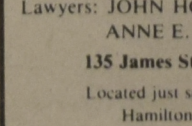

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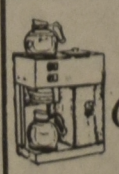

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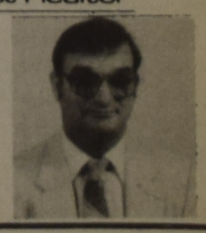

Classified/News

School funding an election issue for Jews

Alison de Groot

TORONTO — The Canadian Jewish Congress is using the upcoming Ontario provincial election as an opportunity to bring the issue of separate school funding to the attention of the public.

The Jewish Congress called on Premier David Peterson's provincial government to extend financial support to Ontario's 20 Hebrew schools and end its "blatant discrimination," the *Toronto Star* reports.

Congress spokesperson Murray Segal called the provincial election "an opportune time to go to the public with this issue. We want it resolved," Segal says. Segal reportedly told a news conference, "It's unfair, morally outrageous, and dangerous to set apart for public funding only Catholic religious schools as a matter of law."

The Star reports that Segal challenged Ontario opposition parties and Ontario residents to take a stand and join a write-in campaign demanding "fairness in educational funding."

Despite a 1985 report to the government arguing that provincial funding solely for Roman Catholic schools was discriminatory; Hebrew schools, private Christian schools and other independent schools are still fighting for funding.

The Coalition for Religious Freedom in Education is supporting the Jewish Congress' decision. In a statement released the day after the Jewish Congress' press conference, the Coalition appealed to Peterson to "keep the promises he made in October 1985 when he said he hoped to resolve the public funding issue."

The Coalition includes a variety of Christian denominations, local churches, educational institutions, citizens' groups and individuals interested in educational issues.

France proposes controversial method to halt AIDS

PARIS, France (EP) — In an effort to slow the sweeping progress of AIDS in France, some French leaders have called for a re-opening of the once-legal brothels, government sanctioned houses of prostitution, where they believe they will be able to impose standards of sexual behaviour and cleanliness. Michele Barzach, director for health and social welfare for Paris, wants to model the brothels after the "Eros Centers" of West Germany, where prostitutes must be examined by a doctor every two weeks. Brothels in France have been illegal since 1946 when Marthe Richard spearheaded an effort to pass a law against them. Prostitution itself, however, was not outlawed and is still legally practised. Paris is believed to be the fourth leading city for AIDS cases, behind San Francisco, New York and Miami.

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It depresses me to see so few of our people from the May long weekend to Labour Day.

Dear Holding the Fort:

Greater affluence and more leisure time have enabled many to purchase a cottage or a permanent trailer site. Consequently, more and more people now speak about a "summer church" with a real sense of belonging where they are known by the locals as "summer guests."

Weekends away sound so wonderful that, in a way, you can hardly blame people for wanting to enjoy their cottage or campsite for as long as the season lasts. We would certainly not put this on the list of pastoral problems needing church disciplinary attention. Our relaxed view is coloured by our acquaintance of many church members who are not as visible during the summer yet are very involved from September to May. It is also coloured by the years that we served a parish in Orillia, Ont., a tourist town that drew many folks to our area and to our church services. Many of these guests were as faithful and supportive as our own church members. Like Canadian snowbirds who winter in Florida or California, they felt at home in two places.

Your letter does remind weekend sojourners of the effect that their continual absence has on those who hold the fort at home for the summer. Many of us have made individual choices about our leisure time without taking our church communities into account.

There is always the danger that we become visitors at home and away since both places may receive only a minimal commitment from us each summer. Persons who go to their cottage or campsite every weekend should look for ways to maintain their relationship with their home church. For example, they might decide to stay home certain Sundays or come back early for an evening service for no other reason than that they need to stay in touch with their fellowship. They also need to give post-dated checks for the summer so that the local congregation does not suffer from diminished financial support.

Thank you for your question. It gets us thinking about the larger picture and that alone will prod us to re-evaluate our lifestyles and come up with compromises that take your concerns to heart.

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With love to all,
Ed & Hennie
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Grandpa & Nanny

Thanks

VAN TUYL:
We would like to thank everyone, who in any way remembered us on the occasion of our 45th wedding anniversary. We thank especially our children and grandchildren who made it such an unforgettable day for us. We praise the Lord for his faithfulness to us through all these years.
Arie and Adriana Van Tuyl, Wellandport, Ont.

Births

McLARDY:
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MICHAEL SEAN

son of Mr. and Mrs. Lionel Hickey.
This joyful occasion will take place, D.V., on Saturday, August 11, 1990, at 4 p.m. in the Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church, Bowmanville, Ont., with Rev. Mike Abma officiating.
Future address: 58 Young St., Woodstock, ON N4S 3L5

BOUWERS-CUNNINGHAM:
The parents request the honour of your presence at the marriage of

JANICE BOUWERS
to
WAYNE CUNNINGHAM,

the Lord willing, on Saturday, August 11, 1990, at four p.m. at First Chr. Ref. Church, 2670 Victoria Dr., Vancouver, B.C.
Future address: 5942 Ontario St., Vancouver, BC V5N 2M7

BOUWERS-KRAAN:

MARY-ANNE
and
JAKE

with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Bouwers and Mr. and Mrs. John Kraan, invite you to share in the celebration of their marriage, the Lord willing, on Saturday, August 4, 1990, at 7 p.m., First Ladner Chr. Ref. Church, Delta, B.C., with Rev. B. Nederlof officiating.
Future address: 3262E 25 Ave., Vancouver BC V5R 1J6

Marriages

BOUWMA-MUNGAL:
Believing that God has brought them together, Richard and Trix Bouwma and Kelvin and Joyce Mungal, are happy to announce that they have celebrated the union in marriage of their children,

KATHLEEN JOYCE
and
HARRISON SHARMA

The marriage took place on August 11, 1990, in the Emmanuel Bible Church in Simcoe, Ont. Pastor Jeff Campbell officiated.
Future address: 61 Talbot St., South, Apt. 2, Simcoe, ON N3Y 2Z4

DE JAGER-BOOMSMA:
With gratitude to our loving God, who has brought them together, Jane and Anthony De Jager and Helen and Martin Boomsma are happy to announce that their children,

ELIZABETH ANN
and
ROBERT MARTIN

will be united in marriage on August 18, 1990, at 3 p.m. in the Chr. Ref. Church, Trafalgar Rd., Georgetown, Ont., with the father of the bride officiating.
Future address: 7 Princess Anne Dr., Georgetown, ON L7G 2B7

DE VRIES-FISHER:
With thanksgiving to God who has prepared

AMY SUSAN
and
MICHAEL JAMES

to be united in marriage, we, Walter and Gail de Vries and Ron and Gerry Fisher, invite you to worship with us and share in the wedding celebration of our children. The ceremony will take place, D.V., on Saturday, August 11, 1990, at one o'clock in the afternoon in the Rehoboth Chr. Ref. Church, 130 Scugog St., Bowmanville, Ont. Pastors Ron Fisher and Mike Abma officiating.
Future address: 910-159 University Ave., W., Waterloo, ON N2L 3E8

HULTINK-TERPSTRA:
Any day in the Lord is a good day but Saturday, Sept. 1, 1990, will be special for the Hultink and Terpstra families.

TESS

daughter of Hank and Rolina and

JOHN

son of Gerben and Ina, plan to marry on that date in the Ancaster Chr. Ref. Church at 3:00 p.m., Rev. B DeJonge officiating.
For the Hultinks this is the first marriage of another generation; for the Terpstras it is their last. Mixed feelings will abound but joy will reign. We wish Tess and John much happiness as they unfold God's will for their lives together.
Future address: 1621 Ridgewood St. S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506 U.S.A.

KLEINHORSMAN-VANDERBOOM:
"If we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us" (1 John 4:12b).
Believing that the Lord brought them together, we, Ed and Marga Klein Horsman of Cedar Valley, Ont., are happy to announce the forthcoming marriage of our daughter,

EDITH HENRIËTTA
to
CARL STEPHEN

son of Wilma Huibers and the late John VanderBoom. The wedding will take place, the Lord willing, on Saturday, August 11, 1990, at 2:30 p.m. at Bethel Chr. Ref. Church in Newmarket, Ont.
Future address: 51 Edgecroft Rd., Etobicoke, ON M8Z 2B9

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Okke and Mary Anema (nee Wierstra) who will celebrate, D.V., their 50th wedding anniversary on August 24, 1990.

Beetgum, Friesland 1940 — Edmonton, Alberta August 24 1990

With praise and thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we joyfully announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

OKKE and MARY (Maaike) ANEMA
(nee Wierstra)

"But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you" (Ps. 39:7a).
We pray that the Lord will continue to be with you in the years to come.
With love from your children and grandchildren:
Shirley & Al Fricker — Delta, B.C.
Tine & Bill Kennedy — Hamilton, Ont.
Jenny & Jake DeWeerd — North Delta, B.C.
Ray & Ada Anema — Houston, B.C.
John Anema — Delta, B.C.
Ann Anema — Stony Plain, Alta.
Jack & Theresa Kalisvaart — Gibbons, Alta.
Harry & Nellie Anema — Gibbons, Alta.
Kim & Debby Anema — Squamish, B.C.
Jacques & Reina Anema — Rosedale, B.C.
28 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren
Open house will be held August 24, 1990, from 8 - 10 p.m., in the East Christian School, 11515-36 St., Edmonton, Alta.

Marriages

ROORDA-SAMPLONIUS:
Dick and Eva Roorda of Clinton, Ont., are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter,

CAROLE
to
MARK

son of Rev. Homer and Pearl Samplonius of Brampton, Ont. The wedding will take place, D.V., on Saturday, Sept. 1, 1990, at the bride's home, Clinton, Ont. Rev. Homer Samplonius officiating.

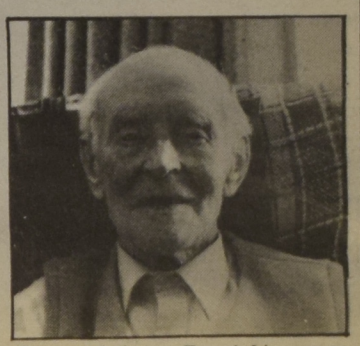
VANDENBERG-DAVIDSON:
Together with our parents, Jack and Margo Vandenberg and Ross and Doris Davidson, we,

ELLY and PAUL

announce with joy our upcoming wedding celebration. The ceremony will take place on August 25, 1990, at 2:30 p.m., in St. Paul's Anglican Church, St. Paul's, Ont. The Revs. Simon Wolfert and Deanna Wilson officiating.
Future address: #15 Maitland Place, Apt. 902, Toronto, ON M4Y 2V6

Anniversaries

Birthday



Congratulations to Francis Lieuwen on the occasion of his 95th birthday!

LIEUWEN:
With praise and thanksgiving to God, we hope to celebrate with our father, grandfather and great-grandfather,

FRANCIS LIEUWEN

his 95th birthday on August 10, 1990.
Happy birthday Dad, from all your children:
Marie
Nel
John & Lucy
Tena & Albert
Pete & Betty
George & Ann
Francis & Orena
Nic & Henny
Jake & Gerda
38 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren.

Marriages

NIEUWHOF-DEBOER:
With joy and thanksgiving to God, Minno and Anna Nieuwhof of Rustico, P.E.I., and Oscar and Alice DeBoer of Chatham, Ont., are happy to announce the marriage of their children,

TETCY
and
RAYMOND WESLEY

This celebration of love will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday, July 28, 1990, at 2:30 p.m. in the Chr. Ref. Church, Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Future address: 259 Drury Lane, Apt. #13, Strathroy, ON N7G 3E7

Church News can be found on page 6.

Classified

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Henricus and Wendelina Weeber (nee Smit) who will celebrate, D.V., their 60th wedding anniversary on August 27, 1990.

Apeldoorn Brampton
1930 August 27 1990

"Even to your old age and grey hairs, I am he. I am he who will sustain you" (Isaiah 46:4a).

We are sharing the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents,

HENRICUS and WENDELINA WEEBER
(nee Smit)

Gerdie & Jake Cappon — Willowdale, Ont.
Bert & Hennie Weeber — Scarborough, Ont.
Peter Weeber — New Hazelton, B.C.
Rennie & Ed Schranz — Whitby, Ont.
Katie & George Baarda — St. Mary's, Ont.

along with grand- and great-grandchildren.

With grateful hearts, we all rejoice.
Give thanks to God, uniting voice.
He holds them up, still leads their way.
For Mom and Dad this day, we pray.
God's loving care we've seen through them
on way to his Jerusalem.

All friends are invited to an open house Wednesday, August 29, 1990, from 2-4 p.m. in the Trinity Hall at Holland Christian Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Brampton, Ont.

No presents please, just your presence.

Home address: Hope Towers, 7900 McLaughlin Rd., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

Buitenpost, Calgary,
Friesland Alberta
1940 August 31 1990

Ps. 118:24.

With joy and thankfulness to our Lord, we wish to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

JOHN and GRACE RAUWERDA
(nee Vandermeer)

We thank God for sparing their lives and for the many blessings he has given them during these many years. We pray that God will continue to bless them and keep them in his care.

Much love from your children:
Trynette & Al Brander
Gerrie & Henry Vanderveen
Dora & Dirk Schonewille
Judy Rauwerda
and grandchildren:
Ken, Robert, Michael, David Brander
Philip, Cynthia, Trevor, Tamara Vanderveen
Pauline, Jonathan, Doreen, Brian Schonewille

An open house will be held in honour of this special occasion on Thursday, August 23, 1990, D.V., from 7-9 p.m. at Emmanuel CRC, 3020-31 St. S.W., Calgary, Alta.

Home address: 4916 Graham Dr. S.W., Calgary, AB T3E 4L4

More anniversaries and obituaries on next page.

Anniversaries

1955 August 27 1990

It is with great pleasure that we would like to announce the 35th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

HANNO and ADRIANNA DE BOER SAP
(nee Den Hollander)

We would like to take this opportunity Mom and Dad, Oma and Opa, to congratulate you and give thanks to the Lord for the many blessings he has bestowed on our family over the years, and we sincerely pray that he will bless you with many more.

With love from your children and grandchildren:
Marianna & Chris Hovestadt — Rexdale, Ont.
Jennifer, Karen, Catherine, Rachel, Kimberly, Amanda
Michael de Boer Sap — Rexdale, Ont.
Heather de Boer Sap & Kevin Bierstaker (fiance) — Woodbridge, Ont.

There will be an open house (for congratulations only) at the family home on August 24, 1990, from 7-10 p.m.

Home address: 96 Stavely Cresc., Rexdale, ON M9W 2C8

1945 August 8 1990

We thank the Lord for the joy we share as we celebrate the 45th anniversary of our parents,

ENNO and TENA ENNEMA

Congratulations Dad and Mom. It is our prayer that the Lord may continue to extend to you in the future his faithfulness and care so richly experienced in the past.

Love from your children and grandchildren:
Ray & Theresa VanderSluis — Chatham, Ont.
Sarah, Dan, Rachel, Mary Ellen, Philip
Pete & Laura Enneson — Toronto, Ont.
Keira, Jean, Molly
Tena & Ron Groenendal — Chicago, Ill.
Becky, Jason, Alecia, Nathan

Home address: 76 Townsend Centre Dr., Townsend, Ont.

Jarvis Grimsby
1965 August 28 1990

With gratitude to God for his faithfulness, family and friends are invited to celebrate with

LOUIE and JANE REGNERUS
(nee Westerhuis)

their 25th wedding anniversary on Saturday, August 25, 1990, D.V., with an open house at Fruitland Chr. Ref. Church from 2-5 p.m.

Best wishes only.

Their children:
Andrew & Melinda — Thorold
Roger & Elma — Niagara Falls
Marlene — Grimsby
Lloyd — Grimsby

Home address: 18 Geddes St., Grimsby, ON L3M 1J4

Anniversaries

Ylst, Friesland Lethbridge, Alta.
1940 1990

Ps. 84:12.

"O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in thee."

Grateful to our Lord for all his goodness, we the children and grandchildren of,

PETER and JENNIE SYTSMA
(nee Spijksma)

wish to announce their 50th wedding anniversary, the Lord willing, on Sept. 4, 1990. Congratulations and may God richly bless you in service to him!

Love from:
John & Ineke Sytsma — Bow Island, Alta.
(Cindy) & Mitch, (Deb) & Brian, Sam
Gerry & Flo Sytsma — Calgary, Alta.
Doug, Bruce, Kevin, Joni, Julia
Dick & Jean Sytsma — Surrey, B.C.
Rob, Ron, Julie, Jenine
Barbara & Harry Halma — Cranford, Alta.
(Jack) & Karen, Janelle, Norma, Andrea, Duane
Weltje & John Gouw — Leduc, Alta.
Curtis, Lynn, Candice
Wynne & Uilke Bouwman — Taber, Alta.
(Laura) & Jake, Sheryl, Dale, Martin, Brent
Wilma & Andy Van Biert — Edmonton, Alta.
Jordan, Lara
Rita & Harry Brouwer — Rocky Mtn. House, Alta.
Chris, Les, Kerry, Kelly
Jim & Deb Sytsma — Rocky Mtn. House, Alta.
Nathan, Jennifer

An open house will be held on Saturday, Sept. 1, 1990, from 1:30-4:30 p.m. in the Maranatha CRC fellowship hall, 260 McGill Blvd., West Lethbridge, Alta.

Home address: #806 2201-32 St. S., Lethbridge, AB T1K 3A7

1965 August 14 1990

With praise and thanksgiving to God, we celebrate our parents'

ANDY and JANIE TENYENHUIS
(nee Koole)

25th wedding anniversary. Congratulations Mom and Dad. May God grant us many more years together of love, joy and happiness.

Your children:
Edward — Waterloo
Jacqueline — Toronto
Evelyn — Shanty Bay

An open house will be held to celebrate their anniversary. All friends and family are invited to join us at the First Chr. Ref. Church, 33 Shirley Ave., Barrie, Ont., on Saturday, August 18, 1990, from 2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Best wishes only.

If you would like directions, please call us at (705) 722-7160.

Home address: R.R.#1, Shanty Bay, ON L0L 2L0

1965 August 28 1990

"Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things" (Ps. 98:1).

With joy and thankfulness, we celebrate with our parents,

BILL and NELLIE VANDERLAAN
(nee Visser)

their 25th wedding anniversary.

We pray that God will continue to bless and keep them in his care.

Love:
Richard & Tanya Vyn — Ridgetown, Ont.
Jevin, Ashlyn
Mart & Tina VanderLaan — Belleville, Ont.
Paul — at home

Home address: 99 Percy St., P.O. Box 1555, Brighton, ON K0K 1H0

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Fred and Winnie Olthuis (nee Prins) who will celebrate, D.V., their 50th wedding anniversary on August 14, 1990.

1940 August 14 1990

With thankfulness to the Lord for blessing and caring for us and our children and grandchildren that we may celebrate our 50th anniversary.

FRED and WINNIE OLTHUIS
(nee Prins)

Open house at East Christian School Gym, 11515-36 St., August 18, 1990, 2:30 - 9 p.m.

No gifts.

Home address: 5011-110 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5W 0H9

1945 August 23 1990

With joy and thankfulness to God, we are happy to announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents,

STEPHEN and MYNTJE HANSMA
(nee Brouwer de Koning)

May the Lord continue to bless you for each other and us.

With love and congratulations from your children and grandchildren:
Frank & Gertie Hansma — Drayton, Ont.
Dave, Mike, Sherilyn
Alice & Bill Ronhaar — Hamilton, Ont.
Jeff, Mark, Rachel
Tim & Darlyne Hansma — Elmworth, Alta.
Tammy, Duane, Lisa, Grant, Melanie
Jane & Ed Pyper — Guelph, Ont.
Julie, Rob, Ken, Debbie
Hilda & Art Van Lochem — Welland, Ont.
Kevin, Neil
Pete & Judy Hansma — Kitchener, Ont.
Nicole, Karyn, Danielle
Steve & Pat Hansma — Drayton, Ont.
Stevie, Scott, Pamela, Amy
Wilma & Carl Stryker — Kitchener, Ont.
Rebecca, Gregory, Brian

Home address: P.O. Box 282, Drayton, ON N0G 1P0

Peterborough Kitchener
1965 August 14 1990

With praise and thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we express our joy for our parents' 25 years of marriage.

LUKE and HELEN JANSSEN
(nee de Vries)

May God continue to "instruct you and teach you the way you should go" (Ps. 32:8).

Love:
Valerie & Jim Vanderwoerd — Guelph, Ont.
Christine Janssen — Kitchener, Ont., & John Stryker — Stratford, Ont.
Jeff Janssen — Kitchener, Ont.
Stephen Janssen — Kitchener, Ont.

Home address: 139 Forest Hill Dr., Kitchener, ON N2M 4G4 (741-1976)

Anniversaries

1950 August 31 1990

MARTIN and ADA GELEYNSE

With thanks to God we are happy to announce that with our parents we may celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary, 40 years of service in the ordained ministry, and retirement from that ministry.

From the children and grandchildren:
Gerard & Ellie Duiker — North York
Henry, Mark, Sandra Alida
Bart & Joyce Geleynse — Inkerman
Luke, Emily, Bart, Reuben, Joel
Carel & Irene Geleynse — Charlottetown
Marty, David, Maria
John & Tina Aukema — Toronto
Anna, Karen
Nick & Fanny Geleynse — Clinton
Jessica, Steven, Ryan, Bradley
John & Anneke Oegema — Ottawa
Bart, Nicholas, Timothy, Alida
Andy & Yvonne Geleynse — Brampton
Samuel, Benjamin
John Geleynse & Melanie Carkner — Ottawa
Jeffrey Geleynse — Stratford

Retirement celebration service: Sept. 2, 1990, at 10:00 a.m. in the Stratford CRC, 200 Ontario St.

New home address: 27 Church St., Stratford, ON N5A 2P9; (519) 271-5793

Kootstertille, Brampton,
Friesland Ontario
1940 July 11 1990

We congratulate our parents on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary.

JACOB and KLASIENA HAMSTRA
(Hofman)

"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22,23).

To celebrate God's goodness and faithfulness to us all, and to rejoice in our love as a family, we all spent a week together at Clear Lake, Ont.

Dorothy & Matt Kwantes — Abbotsford, B.C.
Cindy, Heather, James, Dianne
Hank & Pauline Hamstra — Langley, B.C.
Mark, Jake, Jessica
Lena & Steve Weber — Huntsville, Alabama
Amy, Bob, Sara
Shirley & Dave Kidd — Santa Monica, Calif.
Lorna
Frances & Keith Oussoren — Orangeville, Ont.
Jeffrey, Jennifer, Lori, Aaron
Agnes & Andy Kramer — Ingersoll, Ont.
Anna, Steffen, Ilse

Home address: Holland Christian Homes, Trinity Towers, Apt. 518, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

Classified

Anniversaries

1950 August 29 1990

"And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness" (Col. 3:14).

With thankfulness to God we celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents,

FRED and JANE RISSELADA
(nee Klooster)

We pray that the Lord may continue to keep them in his care in the years to come.

Love and congratulations from your family:

Dick & Jean
Steven, Michael, Gregory, Bryan

Art & Helen
Tracy, Philip, Ryan, Jason, Benjamin, Travis, Loralie

John & Joanne
Kevin, Karen, Gary, David

Tony Risselada

We hope to celebrate by open house on Wednesday evening, August 29, 1990, from 7:30-10:00 p.m. at Trinity Chr. Ref. Church, 13427-57 St., Edmonton, Alta.

Best wishes only.

Home address: 3633-112 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5W 0M3

Hoogeveen, Dr. Brampton, Ont.
1930 1990

All praise and glory to the Lord, who made it possible that our parents,

JAN KROEZEN
and
ALEIDA KROEZEN-SCHOLING

on August 3, 1990, could celebrate their 60th anniversary. We thank the Lord for you Mom and Dad and pray that he will surround you with his love and comfort every day in the future.

God bless you.

With all our love, your children:

Margaretha & Arie Van Helden — Beamsville, Ont.

John & Jane Kroezen — Kentville, N.S.

Gary & Susan Kroezen — Hepworth, Ont.

Libby Kroezen — Stoney Creek, Ont.

Also from your 19 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

We love you Opa and Oma.

Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Holland Christian Homes, Apart C PH05, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

"Praise the Lord."

Schoonebeek, Drente Simcoe, Ontario
1950 August 30 1990

With thanksgiving to God for his many blessings, we announce the 40th anniversary of our parents and grandparents,

RALPH and HILLIE KUIPERS
(nee Ellen)

May God give you many more years together.

With love:

John & Jean — Jarvis, Ont.
Nicki, Fred

Jerry & Dottie — Waterloo, Ont.

Herma & Hans — Simcoe, Ont.
Stephanie, Jennifer, Tracie

Henrietta — Jarvis, Ont.
Jeremy, Alyssa

Ed & Sandra — Simcoe, Ont.

Evelyn & Ron — Simcoe, Ont.
Jason

To celebrate this happy occasion, open house will be held August 25, 1990, from 2-4 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the Ebenezer Chr. Ref. Church, Jarvis, Ont.

Best wishes only, please.

Home address: 12 Oakwood Ave., Simcoe, ON N3Y 1H3

Calendar of Events can be found on page 6.

Anniversaries

1950 August 22 1990

With much joy in our hearts, we are thankful to the Lord that we will celebrate with our parents and grandparents,

MARTEN and GRIETJE JOLDERSMA
(nee Heuving)

their 40th wedding anniversary.

We pray that our Lord will continue to bless them and keep them together for many more years.

With love from your children and grandchildren:

Mary & Harold Douma — Finch, Ont.
Michael, Sarah, Heather

Ginus & Marg Joldersma — Brinston, Ont.
Erin, Kevin

Jenny Joldersma — Alexandria, Ont.

Lambert & Hennie Joldersma — Brinston, Ont.
Ryan, Karly, Chelsea

Arlene & Sid Vanderveen — Timmins, Ont.
Nicholas, Jordan

An open house will be held, D.V., on August 25, 1990, from 2-4 p.m. at the Iroquois United Church Hall.

Home address: Williamsburg, ON K0C 2H0

Obituaries

In our sadness, and yet in joy, our husband, father and grandfather,

Rev. FREDERICK FRITZ BAKKER

went to be with his Lord on July 10, 1990, after a brief struggle with cancer. He died in the full conviction that he shared in the victory of Christ. The funeral service, held July 13, 1990, was a celebration of God's peace and love. Rev. Bakker served as pastor in the Immanuel CRC of Simcoe, the Hebron CRC of Whitby, and in the Second CRC of Sarnia, all of Ontario. The last 3½ years he spent as a missionary to the Fulani people in Nigeria, West Africa.

He was dearly loved by his wife Theresa (Guetter) Bakker of London, Ont., and the late Fenna (Heetebrij) Bakker (1973), and by his children and grandchildren!

The late Elizabeth Bakker-Cooper (1988) and Jeff and Arlene Cooper — Grand Rapids, MI
Jesse, Roanna, Vanessa

John & Wendy Bakker — Whitby, Ont.
Rachel, Alicia, Derek

Paul Bakker — Strathroy, Ont.
Michelle, Ian, Shannon

Annette Bakker & Dal Swackhammer (fiance) — Burlington, Ont.

Derric & Mary Nel Bakker — London, Ont.

David Bakker — Kitchener, Ont.

Winsum, Fr. Kingston, Ont.
1914 1990

"No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).

On July 16, 1990, the Lord took his child

BAUKJE BOUMA
(nee Talsma)

dear wife of John Bouma, dear mother, grandmother and great-grandmother of:

Liz & Dick VanRooyen — Forest, Ont.
Bev & Rick (Ryan, Brianne)
Rick, Jason

Dirk & Sylvia Bouma — Kingston, Ont.
David, Juanita, Leisha, Andrea

Andy & Jenny Bouma — Woodstock, Ont.
Sarah, Mark, Kristin, Ryan, Chad

Dear sister of Epke Talsma, Hattem, the Neth. Funeral service was held at First Chr. Ref. Church, Kingston, Ont., on Wednesday, July 18, 1990, at 2:00 p.m. Rev. Carl Tuyl officiated.

Home address: 480 Elliot Ave., Apt. 107, Kingston, ON K7K 6J9

Obituaries

On Tuesday, July 10, 1990, the Lord called home our son-in-law and brother-in-law,

FRED F. BAKKER

May God give you, Theresa, and the Bakker family, the strength and courage to go on, trusting that he will carry you through.

The Guetter family

Home address: 420 Wortley Rd., London, ON N6C 3S6

"What is your only comfort in life and in death?

That I am not my own but belong body and soul, in life and in death to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ" (Lord's Day 1).

On Saturday, July 28, 1990, the Lord called home our dear husband, father and opa,

DOEKE (Don) BUURSMA

Born August 15, 1924, Ferward, Fr.

Beloved husband of Maartje (Martha) Boekee.

Dear father of:

Jane & Jerry Haanstra — Vinemount, Ont.
Jennifer, Jason, Janine, Janelle, Janice

Janet & Neil VanderSpek — Woodstock, Ont.
Kevin, Marlene, Derek, Alicia

Martin & Jeannette Buursma — Grimsby, Ont.
Derek, Monique, Marika

Although we are saddened by his passing, we have the assurance that he is at home with the Lord whom he loved.

Funeral service was held at the First Chr. Ref. Church, Hamilton, Ont., on July 31, 1990. Rev. Fred Heslinga and Pastor Jake Postuma officiated.

Home address: 843 Garth St., Hamilton, ON L9C 4K7

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved his appearing" (II Tim. 4:7-8).

On July 16, 1990, the Lord called home,

AALTJE DE KLEER
(nee Reurink)

at the age of 92, beloved wife of the late Jacobus de Kleer.

Loving mother of:

Teuntje & Derk Nijhuis — Vars

Marie & Kees Joustra — Vernon

Nel van Benthem — Carlsbad Springs

Eric de Kleer — Carlsbad Springs

Peter de Kleer — Gloucester

Christine & John Lubbers — Carlsbad Springs

Alice de Kleer — Gloucester

Grandmother of 27 grandchildren and 33 great-grandchildren.

She survived by two brothers, Jan of Alberta, Gerrit and sisters Marie, Margje, Jenny, Geesje, Corrie and Dien of the Neth. Predeceased by brothers Peter, Johan and sisters Grietje, Jantje and Clara.

Funeral services were held at Calvary Chr. Ref. Church on Thursday, July 19, 1990, at 10:30 a.m. Rev. G. Hogeterp officiating.

Correspondence address: Miss A. de Kleer, R.R.#6, Box 275, Gloucester, ON K1G 3N4

On Friday, July 20, 1990, it pleased the Lord to take unto Himself our dear uncle,

SIMON FISHER (Visser)

at the age of 97.

Psalm 68:10.

Taeke & Detty Visser and family — R.R.#2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9

Taeke & Agnes Visser and family — Edward Ave., R.R.#2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9

The funeral took place on Monday, July 23, 1990, in the Holland Marsh Chr. Ref. Church.

Obituaries

On July 16, 1990, the Lord took to his heavenly home, our loving husband, father and grandfather,

LEENDERT DEN ENGELSMAN

in his 61st year.

Beloved husband of Grace Den Engelsman (nee Bruinewoud).

Father and grandfather of:

Carolyn Den Engelsman — Stouffville, Ont.
Aaron

Barb & Bill VanDommelen — Brampton, Ont.
Billy, Joe, Scott, Mark

Eric & Teresa Den Engelsman — Thornhill, Ont.

Rose & Larry Dekkema — Aurora, Ont.
Colin, Marisca, Aislin

John & Cheryl Den Engelsman — Holland Landing, Ont.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:3).

Family address: 339 Lori Ave., Stouffville, ON L4A 6C4

April 16, 1975 July 24, 1990

Very suddenly at his appointed time, God called to his eternal home, his covenant child, our beloved granddaughter, niece and cousin,

DEANNA LYNN KINGMA

Beloved daughter of Gerben Kingma. Loving sister of Godfrey, Gerry and Daryl.

Beloved granddaughter of Marten and Antje Kingma — Strathroy, Ont.

Loving niece and cousin of:

Jitske & Geert Horinga — Port Colborne, Ont.
Albert, Barbara & Danny (fiance), Anita & Kevin (Ashley), James, Bernice & Alan (fiance), Marlene & Dave (fiance), Michael

Bertha Van der Heide — Ilderton, Ont.
Aileen, Doreen, Marcia, Gregory, Jacqueline, Elizabeth, Patricia

Shirley & Peter Stol — Strathroy, Ont.
Clarence & Karina (Karissa), Anita (Cheryl), Marten & Andrea (fiancee), Thelma & Ray (Nathan, Harry)

Marten & Nellie Kingma — London, Ont.
Sheri, Jennifer

Engbert & Diana Kingma — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Jeremy, Christopher, Jennifer

Andrew & Joanne Kingma — Ilderton, Ont.
Brittany

May the Lord comfort and sustain her father and her brothers.

Correspondence address: G. Kingma, 520 Dewan St., Strathroy, ON N7G 3C7 or M. Kingma, 400 Dominion St., Apt. 7, Strathroy, ON N7G 3G8

On July 23, 1990, the Lord called home to his eternal rest after a brief illness,

JOHANNES KORSTANJE

Born Feb. 22, 1917.

"... the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore" (Ps. 121).

Lovingly remembered by his wife Corrie Korstanje-Hoogendam.

His children and grandchildren:

Lynn & Terri Korstanje
Terri-Lynn, Paul, Jason

Also by:

Ria & John Ritsema — Guelph, Ont.

Leny & John Rustenburg — Whitby, Ont.

Netty & Harry Kalsbeek — Mississauga, Ont.

Hans & Shirley Hoogendam — Calgary, Alta.

and families

Home address: 1130 Queens Ave., Apt. 601, Oakville, ON L6H 2B6

Obituaries

"My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (Ps. 73:26).

On July 23, 1990, the Lord called home our dear friend,

JOHAN KORSTANJE

president of our seniors club.

May the Lord comfort his wife and family.

The Golden Age Club of Clarkson, Ont.

On August 4, 1990, the Lord took to his heavenly home our dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle,

HENRY OLTHOFF

at the age of 49 years.

Although we are saddened by his passing, we have assurance that he is at home with the Lord whom he loved.

May our loving God comfort his wife Dorothy.

His children:

Trudy & Mark

Cindy

John

"Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him" (Ps. 34:8b).

John & Helen — London

Ben & Florence — London

Henrietta & Oakie — Ingersoll

Rien & Hilda — London

nieces and nephews

Home address: 31 Cartier Dr., Kitchener, ON N2E 1E3

On July 14, 1990, the Lord took home our beloved husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather,

MIKE (Minze) POSTMA

in his 81st year.

Survived by:

Wife: Catherina Postma-Zwier — Ridgetown, Ont.

Children:

Margaret & Eppe Boersema — Chatham, Ont.

John & Trudy Postma — Chatham, Ont.

Ralph & Annie Postma — Blenheim, Ont.

Susie & Joe Cabral — Tilbury, Ont.

George & Sadie Postma — Chatham, Ont.

Hank & Joan Postma — Sarnia, Ont.

Dienie Postma — Ridgetown, Ont.

Also surviving are two brothers, George of Clinton and Hank of Chatham, and three sisters in Holland.

Predeceased by one grandchild and two great-grandchildren, one brother and three sisters in Holland.

Funeral was held on July 17, 1990, with Rev. K. VanderWal of Blenheim Chr. Ref. Church.

Correspondence address: P.O. Box 278, 17 Erie St. N., Ridgetown, ON N0P 2C0

Op 28 juni, 1990, name de Heere tot zich

JOHN VELTMAN

ons aller vriend en medelid.

De Jeugd van Vroeger

Trenton, Ont.

Nijega Medicine Hat
1908 1990

On Saturday, July 7, 1990, the Lord called home our beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother,

PIETJE ZWAAGSTRA-ADEMA

Beloved wife of Albert Zwaagstra.

Dear mother of:

Joyce & Walter Pater — Winnipeg

John & Mary Zwaagstra — Rocky Mtn. House

Martha & John Jonker — Redcliff

Charlie & Marja Zwaagstra — Calgary

Bill Zwaagstra — Medicine Hat

Andy & Marilyn Zwaagstra — Lethbridge

Dora & Walter Craats — Redcliff

Predeceased by one son Anne.

Sadly missed by 21 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Rom. 14:7-9.

Classified

Obituaries

On June 30, 1990, the Lord suddenly called home our dear son-in-law, brother-in-law and uncle,

CORNELIS VAN DE KREEKE

at the age of 72.
May our loving God comfort his wife, Eke, and their family in the Netherlands.
Then on July 23, 1990, the Lord suddenly called home our dear son-in-law, brother-in-law and uncle,

ANTHONY VAN DYKE

at the age of 67.
May God also grant comfort to his wife, Alice, of Listowel, Ont., and their family.
We have the assurance that they are both at home with their Lord.
2 Cor. 5:1.
Lovingly remembered by:
Mem Ellens — Sarnia, Ont.
Pieter & Lore Ellens — Veenendaal, the Neth.
Gordon & Hilly Ellens — Sarnia, Ont.
Auke & Addy Ellens — Bradford, Ont.
Trudy & John Brouwer — Komoka, Ont.
Frances & Gerald Rhebergen — Tottenham, Ont.
Joan & Peter Kapteyn — Sarnia, Ont.
Theresa & Jake Beute — Goderich, Ont.
Agnes & Cor Kamerman — Agincourt, Ont.
and nephews and nieces.

Driesum, Holland 1903 — Abbotsford, B.C. 1990

On July 12, 1990, at the age of 87 years, our earthly father,

ROELOF RITSKE VAN DER WOUDE

has joined his heavenly Father to live with him forever.
"I am with you always, even to the end of the age."
Predeceased by his wife Jeltje in 1980 and son Henk in 1953.
I love the Lord, the Fount of Life
I love the Lord, the fount of life and grace;
He hearts my voice, my cry and supplication,
Inclines his ear, gives strength and consolation;
In life, in death, my heart will seek his face.

Before his saints I'll pay my vows to God;
Even in death's vale he keeps me from evil;
How dear to God the dying of his people!
Praise him, you saints, and sound his name abroad.
Father of:
Rits & Ruth Van der Woude — Port Coquitlam, B.C.
Jenny & Fred Faber — Abbotsford, B.C.
George & Janet Van der Woude — Surrey, B.C.
John & Corrie Van der Woude — Prince George, B.C.
Eelco & Gerda Van der Woude — Surrey, B.C.
19 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren
Correspondence address: 1350 Victoria St., Pt. Coquitlam, BC V3B 6M9

Vacation

Voor een geslaagde vacantie in Holland in de Achterhoek, het hele jaar door zomerhuisjes te huur met 2 of 3 slaapkamers, douche en verwarming. Voor inl. belt u B. Pennings, R.R.#3, Carrying Place, ON K0K 1L0; phone (613) 392-5981 of schrijf: G. Jansen, Kasselder St., 12, 6075 BW, Sinderen, Geld. Holland. Tel. 31-8354-406.

Accommodations

Available room and board for Christian girl. Location: Southwest section of Brampton, close to Sheridan College. Phone (416) 457-2096.

Student housing available in St. Catharines. Needed: two girls to share a house with me. Near bus service. Call 1-416-935-7798 between 5 and 8 p.m.

Student accommodation in Guelph. Looking for Christian girls as roommates, starting September 1990. Four-bedroom townhouse, close to bus route. Please contact Barbara Kerkhof at (519) 853-3404 after 6 p.m.

Bed & Breakfast: Beautiful Niagara Falls, Ont. A pleasant 15 minute walk to the Falls. Friendly home, nice rooms, superb breakfast! Dutch spoken. Mike and Joan Havinga. Tel. (416) 358-3534.

Real Estate

A Steal of a Deal!
BE YOUR OWN BOSS!!
Lifetime chance for very little money. A 30-year-old Dutch business! Owner is retiring. A great set up. Call fast, don't be last. For information contact: Harry Boersma Real Estate Broker, 808 Oxford West, London, Ont. (519) 657-9894.

Attention dairy folks: 92 cow milking stalls. Farm for sale, a steal of a deal for what is there. 46' x 200' barn, 40' x 120' drive shed, 30' x 40' garage; 3 silos, 1 of 24' x 80', 2 of 20' x 80', fabulous home. Automatic feeding systems, 150 acres of the best land in Ontario near Stratford. A real buy at $375,000. Price of a house in the city. Call Harry Boersma Real Estate Broker, 808 Oxford West, London, Ont.; (519) 657-9894.,

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Personal

Single Christian man, late 30s, of Dutch decent, living in the U.S.A. near Vancouver, B.C., would like to correspond with a sincere Christian lady. Please reply to File #2545, c/o Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Christian, single mom, 46, 5'6" tall, demure, attractive, slim and fit, lives in B.C., likes cycling, skiing, camping and travel, would like to meet a caring, sincere, Christian gentleman to share in a fun, loving and growing intimate relationship. Please reply to: File #2546, c/o Calvinist Contact, 261 Martindale Rd., Unit 4, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

For Sale

For sale in Bradenton, Florida: Mobile home 10' x 46' plus Florida room 14' x 20'. Also 2 sheds and carport. Fully furnished. Ready to move in. Sleeps 5-7. Within walking distance to CRC and shopping. Asking $12,000 U.S. For more information call 1-705-745-1403.

For Sale

Mobile home for sale: Sunshine Village, 10th Ave., Lake Worth, Florida. One-and-a-half bedroom and sofa bed; excellent condition. Call 1-201-891-1219.

For Rent

Anyone looking for a safe, quiet place to stay in Florida this coming winter? Especially suited to seniors and single women. Book now for our two-bedroom condo in a park-like security-patrolled complex. Swimming, tennis, fitness facilities, restaurant, walking and biking are available right on the premises. Only 15 min. away from very large, new shopping mall. $2,000 per month or $1,400 out of season. Double up and share the cost with your friends. Call: (519) 765-1637 for more details.

Teachers

STOUFFVILLE, Ont.: Stouffville Christian School requires a teacher for the **intermediate/senior division** in the area of **French,** beginning September 1990. Applicants are asked to send resumes to: The Principal, Stouffville Christian School, R.R.#3, Claremont, ON L0H 1E0

TERRACE, B.C.: Centennial Christian School invites applications from teachers for one opening in the **primary department** for September 1990. Centennial Christian School is situated in the beautiful Skeena Valley and offers many dynamic opportunities for teachers. Send application, resume and references to: Mr. Frank Voogd, Principal, Centennial Christian School, 3608 Sparks St., Terrace, BC V8G 2V6

Help Wanted

Managing opportunity
Bobby Lawn and Pest Control is looking for a sincere and mature Christian person with managing abilities and potential. Year-round employment for the right person. Good pay and benefits. Please call Cor between 8 and 5 at (416) 643-1288 or after hours at (416) 643-3905.

Accepting applications — Mutual Support Systems, a network of rural foster homes in the Niagara Peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties invites applications for the position of

Child Care Worker

The responsibilities of this live-in position include involvement in the educational programming, daily routines, and foster family events within the residential setting. In-service training provides the successful applicant with the necessary skills to nurture the resident's physical, mental, social and spiritual needs. Position includes salary and benefits package. One year, renewable work terms commence in September. Please submit resume to: Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, R.R.#1, Perry Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0 or call 1-416-899-2311.

Calendar of Events and Crossword Puzzle can be found on page 6.

Help Wanted

Holland Christian Homes Inc.

requires a

Dietary Manager

For a 120-bed long-term care facility (three meals per day with snacks) a 116-apartment retirement tower (one meal per day) and approximately 25 Meals on Wheels daily for two senior's apartment buildings.
Responsibilities will include supervision and direction of the dietary department. Policy and procedure manual development for accreditation purposes, ongoing program development, budgeting and staffing.
Candidate must be eligible for membership in the Canadian Food Service Supervisors Association. Candidate must be a graduate of a Food Service Managers Course. Candidate must possess management/personnel skills, food preparation/presentation abilities, skills in purchasing/cost control and menu planning including therapeutic diets.

Submit resume/application to:
Holland Christian Homes Inc.
c/o Administrator
7900 McLaughlin Road South, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2
Phone: (416) 459-3333; Fax: (416) 459-8667

Nursing Department Chairperson

Hope-Calvin Department of Nursing is reopening its search for applicants for Department Chairperson, the term of appointment to begin August 1991 (possibly earlier). Candidates for the position should have a masters degree in nursing and an earned doctorate. Experience in teaching and administration is preferred.
Hope College and Calvin College jointly offer an NLN accredited baccalaureate nursing program in the context of co-educational four-year liberal arts degree programs. Hope College is affiliated with the Reformed Church in America and Calvin College with the Christian Reformed Church in North America. The Department seeks faculty members who affirm the Christian faith and have academic and personal qualifications for teaching and scholarship. Applications from minority persons are especially encouraged. Calvin and Hope Colleges are Equal Opportunity Employers.

Submit letter of application and resume to:
Mary E. Flikkema
Faculty Concerns Committee Chairperson
Department of Nursing
Hope College
Holland, MI 49423

PASTOR REQUIRED:

First Christian Reformed Church of Red Deer, Alberta, is currently vacant and seeking a new pastor. Red Deer is a city of 55,000 people beautifully located in Central Alberta, 90 miles south of Edmonton and 90 miles north of Calgary. 1st CRC is a warm congregation of 160 families seeking a pastor to lead us in worship and spiritual congregational growth.

A church profile is available upon request. Please direct inquiries and short resume to:
Search Committee, c/o John Langelaar
2 Munro Cresc., Red Deer, AB T4N 0H9

Grace Christian Reformed Church

Scarborough (Toronto), Ont., Canada

is expanding its Team Ministry by the addition, to its staff, of a

YOUTH MINISTER

We are looking for an enthusiastic person, who will help us lead, equip and challenge our youth to serve the Lord with joy.
We will send you a Grace Church Information Packet upon request, or upon receipt of your application and resume.

Search Committee
c/o John Van Dyk
Grace Christian Reformed Church
25 Channel Nine Court, Agincourt, ON M1S 4B5

Biography

Celebrating a life, coping with death

If You Do Love Old Men, by Virginia Stem Owens. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990. 211 pp., hardcover. $15.00 U.S. Reviewed by Wayne Brouwer, pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ont.

If You Do Love Old Men is one of those rare books that everyone needs and everyone loves. It's a storybook for all ages, and yet at the same time it's a psychological study that would make excellent collateral reading for a university course. It is inspiring without being merely emotional. It is analytic without being critically judgmental. It is informative without ever sounding bookish or learned.

What is Virginia Stem Owens' book about? On the surface, it's about her grandfather — his character, his strengths and weaknesses, his manner of coping, his elderly years. It's a series of word pictures, often strung together with the dialogue of specific conversations, that open up a single aspect of those things that make him tick. And with that, of course, come the reactions of others around him: family and friends, associates, hucksters and charlatans.

Intimate journey

If that were the sum total of it, the book would be a rousing success. But there is more. On a deeper level, Owens manages to draw us into her reflections on meaning in life. What is family all about? How do we deal with the changing value systems of a world running too fast for us to keep up? What happens to us as we grow old? How do we prepare for death? Who is responsible for the care of the elderly? What does my own aging process mean to me? And what is my significance in the long lines of blood relations that precede and follow me?

The first chapter, "The House," introduces a setting which becomes the inner world of the book. In returning to a house that her grandfather built years earlier, Owens reflects on things that last and things that don't. Along the way she opens up a kind of "memory lane photo album" about her grandfather, giving us a preliminary sketch of the historical events that brought him into the present. And how, with the house and the person coming in view, our intimate journey through aging, dying and death begins.

There are 26 more chapters to the book, coupled in pairs. First in each pair comes a very short "Intrados," usually one page, never more than two. The "Intrados" give scientific and factual data describing particular characteristics of human development. These are focused especially in the way they become more pronounced in the elderly years. A story-telling chapter follows in each couplet, as Owens takes us for a walk with her grandfather. His feelings, his actions, his perceptions help us understand how the facts and figures of the "Intrados" chapter come alive in people we see around us. We begin to better understand our elderly neighbours and relatives. And in spending time with them, we begin also to face our own inner selves. We are allowed to touch the fears we keep deeply hidden. We have the possibility of nodding in silent admiration at the values we try to maintain. We laugh at the foolishness that sometimes makes us critical of others, while at the same time denying the faults and sins that play around in our own bones as well.

Emotional involvement

When we finally come to grandfather's death in the last chapter, we're more than a little emotionally involved. But Owens does not leave us with a heart-in-the-throat sobbing that makes us wish for another time and an earlier era. Instead, she helps us deal with death: her grandfather's, our own family members', and even the death that we each will face. We are not stuck at the funeral or the gravesite. We are released from the comatose helplessness that often surrounds death and dying, and given a sense of wholeness in living, hope in what we yet are, and perspective for participating in the larger enterprise of existence.

If You Do Love Old Men is not really about death and dying, when you come down to it. Rather, it is about life. It is about living in a way that is meaningful. It is about relationships that give life substance, and about taking time to make those relationships a conscious part of our experiences while there is still opportunity.

And the beautiful thing about Virginia Stem Owens' book is that even though it is a very personal odyssey, she's written it for all of us. Perhaps we in Canada will feel a bit lost at first in the regionalness of the stories, since they have a very American flavour to them. Still, the tales are not about an American grandfather. They are stories about people who are never generic, never bland or composite. They are stories about people who always live in a very specific context. And isn't that true of those we know best?

If you have not yet completed your summer reading list, you must put this book on it. And if your list is full already, throw something else out and begin here. You'll be richer for the experience. And so too will be those special people you know, those whose lives you'll touch and feel in a new way.

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Knockout punch

"Then men will say, 'Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth' " (Psalm 58:11).

Somewhere today there's a family that gathers around a meal table in silence. They arrange the plates a little father apart so as not to notice the space where one is missing. She was a beautiful, blossoming daughter. She was a sassy, silly sister. But she's gone now, snatched away in a moment by the stupidity of a drunken driver.

They bow their heads, fold their hands and close their eyes. The father prays: "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name ...."

But he can't go on. The burden rips open his heart and he cries out, "It isn't fair!"

We talk about "blind justice." We expect "fair play." We establish laws to guard "gentlemanly conduct." But we know, deep down in our hearts, that this world is not an excessively fair place to live.

A child dies in a riot simply because he or she was born in the wrong community. A woman miraculously survives a terrible car crash only to waste away with AIDS, gotten in the blood that saved her life. War devastates Lebanon, and any life is game for the sniper's bullet. Ethiopian children starve while corrupt governments battle for wasteful displays of power and wealth and sell stocks of food to purchase weapons.

What's fair about all of that?

We hurt with our aching world. But the tragedy that stuns us most is the strange set of circumstances that catch our own lives in tangled ways. A family here in London, Ont., worked long hours to make a passable living. An opportunity developed in another city, so they sold everything here and bought a family business there. The economy took a tailspin and they lost everything. And along the way several family members died through accident or disease in ways beyond their control.

They smile when they talk with you. But touch that little button of feelings and the tears pour out. It's Naomi's report all over again: "The Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty" (Ruth 1:20).

No fair play here.

Cruelty

But cruelty is the worst form of injustice. If nameless circumstances tangle me in a web of pain I merely cry out in helplessness. But if people are deliberately sadistic, deliberately mean-spirited, deliberately cruel, then my pain turns to anger and my hurt thirsts for vengeance.

That's where David is at in Psalm 58. The words sound like they don't belong in the Bible: "Break the teeth in their mouths, O God!" (6) "Like a slug melting away as it moves along, like a stillborn child, may they not see the sun." (8) "The righteous will be glad ... when they bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked." (10)

But we know how human the words really are. The *Belgic Confession* ends with a description of "The Last Judgment." And we, with our forebears, confess that Judgment Day will be "very pleasant for us." It will bring us "a great comfort." Why? Because we "will see the terrible vengeance that God will bring on the evil ones who tyrannized, oppressed, and tormented [us] in this world."

Not exactly a pretty thought. Still, if there is no cosmic justice, no balancing of the books for eternity, no authoritative judgment upon those who ruin the lives of others in this existence, why should we believe in a "good God?" Why should we believe in a God at all? Might we then not follow the advice of Job's wife when their world was cruelly ripped apart: "Curse God and die!"?

Let people say, at least one day in a future yet to come: "Surely the righteous still are rewarded; surely there is a God who judges the earth."

And then, let those who believe that work for fair play in these days.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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